An Essential Guide to Teaching at KU
# An Essential Guide to Teaching at KU

## INTRODUCTION

A HANDBOOK OF RESOURCES

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An Essential Guide to Teaching at KU: A Handbook of Resources

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Introduction

Few activities are more satisfying than creating a community in which people grow intellectually and become life-long learners. Being in the company of people learning and being engaged with great ideas is an ideal way to spend time, but there’s much more to teaching than just the time spent in a classroom, laboratory, studio or field site. Most of our attention focuses on time with students in scheduled meetings, but such contact time is only one component of teaching. We decide what the intellectual goals for learners will be, identify materials students can use, plan what to do during contact time, and create ways for students to learn on their own outside of class. Teaching occurs outside scheduled times and places, and advising is another feature of teaching. Whether independent reading or discovery research, teachers provide feedback and structure that make learning richer and more focused. Teaching is more enjoyable when it’s well constructed and well received, and we hope these materials support those aims.

We also create opportunities for learners to demonstrate their understanding, knowledge and skills through projects, papers, performances and answers to questions. Successful students can use ideas and skills in ways that weren’t directly taught to them, and it’s important to create variations in performance requirements that sample an ideal range of this transfer of learning to new situations. Once feedback is given to students, effective teachers examine patterns of learning to identify topics or skills that need different preparation in the next course offering.

Being a complex craft, teaching evolves over time, with additional layers of skill and nuance being added with successive offerings of a class. Even very good classes, successful in generating learning, continue to develop as teachers learn from how students respond to their instruction. It’s good to start simply in teaching, by offering clear, interesting, and useful skills and knowledge to students. More features of learning and more complex measures of understanding can evolve over time, and iterative refinement in teaching is one important source of the enjoyment we experience. This guide allows teachers to find useful strategies for both framing a course initially and for refining it over time.

Overall, we hope we present an inclusive model of teaching that helps KU faculty members be effective in achieving their teaching goals.

Dan Bernstein
Director, Center for Teaching Excellence
Using This Guide

This guide focuses on ways that college teachers provide maximum benefit to learners, so it’s intended for an audience of university faculty members who will organize and offer courses. Teachers who are early in career will begin by considering the section on *Essential Practices*, as it describes some of the fundamentals of professional course delivery. An experienced teacher would also do well to look at this segment, using the topics as a reminder of those aspects of teaching that constitute the foundation of a good course. Not every course nor every instructor will always have all the features of that foundation, but it’s a good model to keep in mind.

All faculty members will find the section on *Representing Teaching* to be useful, as it offers an outline for efficient but rich ways to show others how we teach and how our students learn. We’ve tried to make this chapter similar to a workbook that allows the gradual development of a narrative about teaching and learning, using primarily materials that are existing products of courses delivered. This outline is useful for self-development as a teacher, but it also generates appropriate documentation useful in the context of KU’s evaluation of teaching.

Many of us will be fortunate to have long careers in college teaching, and there will be time to offer a variety of courses and to develop some courses over many offerings. The section on *Specialized Practices* describes a variety of ways that learning can be promoted and that teaching can be enriched. It benefits us to have good ideas for continuing development of courses, as upgrades to practices help keep teaching fresh and enjoyable.

The final chapter, *KU Policies and Procedures*, provides an overview of this topic. The section begins with a discussion of civility and responsibilities for learning, and it includes excerpts of key policies from the *University Senate Rules and Regulations*.

It’s important to remember that there are mutual responsibilities for learning, with both students and faculty members participating in this process. For our part, faculty members have a responsibility to create learning environments with clear and appropriate intellectual goals and adequate resources to support learning. This includes identifying criteria for success in learning and maintaining well-crafted and up-to-date teaching practices that are known to optimize learning. Professional quality teaching must be more than merely making knowledge and skills available, as teachers should inquire to see how much learning is actually taking place. When we employ the best practices our profession provides, that doesn’t diminish students’ responsibility to engage fully in the learning opportunities we construct.

For their part, students must make available enough time to allow for full preparation and study in addition to required class, lab or practicum time. They have a responsibility to use that time to read, to inquire, to work with colleagues, to write, and to think about their work. Without that commitment, teaching will ultimately be unsuccessful, and even the best instructional design and effort will not generate meaningful understanding, skill or knowledge.

This guide focuses on the teacher’s potential participation in the learning process, as that is the component of education that we control. At a minimum, faculty members can embrace the need to provide professional instruction, but we can also work with our larger community to promote the fullest engagement and participation in education by our students. When we all do our part, we create a richer academic community and a successful learning environment.
ALIGNING GOALS, ASSIGNMENTS AND PRACTICES

Course design involves identifying course goals, planning what to teach, what opportunities students will have for learning, and how you’ll evaluate whether students are meeting course goals. Designing a course can be done adeptly with backward design: determine concepts you want students to master, then plan how you’ll determine whether they have learned the concepts. This guides which resources and methods you use to facilitate learning.

As you plan, you may experience some tension about how much you should cover in your course. Identifying key course topics can help you achieve balance. Three questions from Wiggins and McTighe (1998) can help you identify these key topics:

1. To what extent does the idea, topic, or process represent a “big idea” having enduring value beyond the classroom?
2. To what extent does the idea, topic, or process reside at the heart of the discipline?
3. To what extent does the idea, topic, or process offer potential for engaging students?

Consider students’ goals and characteristics. Students may take your course to understand principles, learn to communicate effectively, learn to organize ideas or interpret data, or understand how researchers gain knowledge. Use this information, along with course goals, to guide your course structure and teaching pace.

After you choose material, establish criteria for obtaining evidence of learning. A key feature of backward design is that understanding increases across time, as students process, reassess and connect information. Therefore, assessments to measure increasing levels of understanding should be conducted throughout the semester by various means such as discussions, tests and quizzes, and projects in which students analyze their own understanding. Once you decide upon course concepts and assessment criteria, focus on which teaching strategies will help students reach course goals; key concepts, rather than a methodology, drive teaching.

Backward Design

1. Goals 
   - Papers
   - Exams
   - Rubrics
   - Other

2. Assessments

3. Practice
   - Inside Class
   - Outside Class
WRITING A SYLLABUS

When you’re writing a syllabus, start with basic information: the year and semester of the course, title, class number, number of credits, and meeting time and place. Provide your name, office address (and a map if it’s hard to find) and contact information. Indicate whether students need to make appointments or may just stop in. If you list a home number, specify restrictions for its use. Clarify prerequisites, knowledge, skills or experience you expect students to have or courses they should have completed. Suggest how they might refresh skills if needed.

Outline the course’s purpose: What is the course about and why would students want to learn the material? Describe three to five general goals, and explain why you’ve arranged topics in a given order and the logic of concepts you’ve selected. Tell students whether the class involves fieldwork, projects, lectures or discussion, and indicate if any activities are optional.

Explain why textbooks and readings were chosen. Show the relationship between readings and course objectives. Also provide details about additional materials that will be needed.

Specify the nature and format of assignments. Give exam dates and indicate the nature of the tests (e.g., essay, short-answer). Explain how assignments relate to course objectives. Describe your grading procedures, including components of the final grade and weights for each component. Explain whether you’ll grade on a curve or use an absolute scale, and if any grades can be dropped. Also explain any other course requirements, such as study groups. Clearly state your policies about class attendance, late work, missing homework, tests or exams, makeups, extra credit, requesting extensions, reporting illnesses, cheating and plagiarism. You might also list acceptable and unacceptable classroom behavior (see Communication Guidelines, page 64). Let students know that if they need an accommodation for any type of disability, they should meet with you to discuss what modifications are necessary. You can find a sample statement for this at www.disability.ku.edu/~disability/faculty/syllabus_statement.shtml.

Include a calendar with a sequence of topics and readings. Exam dates should be firmly fixed; dates for topics or activities may be tentative. Also list the last day students can withdraw without penalty. Give them a sense of how much work the course requires.

A syllabus is a contract between you and your students. Consider adding a statement to protect yourself if changes must be made: “Course schedule and procedures are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.” For more information, contact CTE for resources on writing a syllabus.

SYLLABUS CHECKLIST

1. Basic information: Course title and number; semester and year of course; meeting time and place, faculty information
2. Course description
3. Prerequisites
4. Course goals and objectives
5. Textbooks and readings by authors and editions
6. Assignments, term papers and exams
7. Student evaluation and grades
8. Course policies
9. Options for students with special needs
10. Course calendar/schedule
DEVELOPING ASSIGNMENTS

One of the most important features of course design is developing opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, how well they understand course material, or how well they can use skills they are developing in the course. Some of these occasions will be low-stakes, for practice to help students grow in their understanding of course material, and some will be high-stakes, for a significant portion of a final grade. Whether for practice or for evaluation, the performance asked for on assignments should closely represent your course goals (see box on page 3), and students should always receive informative feedback on their performances. Learning is maximized when students use their understanding in challenging ways and find out from you which features of their work match your expectations and which don’t.

The performance appropriate for any individual course is likely to cover various domains, and most courses should include a range of performance. Within a single course, students will identify basic terms, facts or information about a field and also apply concepts in new, untaught situations. It’s possible that they may combine ideas or generate their own evaluation of observations or findings. It’s not possible to engage in complex analysis or critical thinking without some basic knowledge of a field, but merely reciting basic knowledge without being able to use it or evaluate it is equally limiting. As an instructor, you’ll decide how to distribute the assignments you give across that continuum, from remembering to using to evaluating. Research on memory consistently finds that rote learning is forgotten most quickly, but ideas and information that are used in new contexts or connected to existing understanding will be remembered best.

Consider work done by Benjamin Bloom (1956) and his colleagues many decades ago. They framed a set of categories of learning performance, ranging from rote remembering to complex evaluation, hoping that teachers would include a variety of opportunities for students. Subsequent scholars have added new language to the basic ideas (often called Bloom’s Taxonomy), and many people list verbs that go with the different categories of skills. When you give assignments using those verbs, the notion goes, you are likely tapping into that category of learning. In the box at right, we reproduce one contemporary treatment of these categories and accompanying assignment verbs for your use. Consideration of these categories will help you distribute student work across the range of this useful intellectual continuum.

![Bloom's Taxonomy Diagram]

Descriptions of each level and appropriate terms for asking questions at each level follow:

**Evaluation**—Make judgments about the value of materials or methods for given purposes; make appraisals that satisfy specific criteria: appraise, compare, conclude, contrast, criticize, describe, discriminate, explain, justify, interpret, support.

**Synthesis**—Combine elements to form a whole; arrange elements to form a new structure: categorize, combine, compile, tell, devise, design, explain, generate, organize, plan, reconstruct, revise.

**Analysis**—Break material down into elements; make relationships between ideas explicit: differentiate, distinguish, illustrate, infer, point out, relate, select, separate.

**Application**—Use abstractions in concrete situations: demonstrate, modify, operate, prepare, produce, relate, show, solve, use.

**Comprehension**—Use information without necessarily relating it to other material or seeing fullest implication: convert, defend, distinguish, estimate, explain, extend, generalize, give examples, infer, predict, summarize.

**Knowledge**—Recall specific facts, general concepts: define, describe, identify, list, match, name, outline, select, state.
For testing to be effective and worthwhile for you and your students, consider the exams you’ll implement when you’re designing a course. If evaluation is considered only in hindsight, it’s likely your time will be used ineffectively and students will be discontent with how their learning was assessed.

Design tests that will measure the goals you set out to achieve in the course and be clear in your instructions. Walvoord and Anderson recommend teachers ask themselves the following question: “By the end of the course, I want my students to be able to (fill in the blank).” Use your responses to guide assessment design.

It’s often advantageous to mix types of items (multiple choice, essay, short answer) on a written exam or to mix assessments throughout the course (e.g., a performance component with a written component). Weaknesses connected with one type of item or aspect of students’ test taking skills will be minimized. It’s also useful to ask how students in the future would be likely to use what they are learning in your course. If they’ll be expected to recognize an example of a phenomenon or category, then give them opportunities to attempt such recognition in your course. If they’ll be asked to evaluate the evidence for a claim relevant to your field, then your assignments should give them practice in such evaluation and graded feedback on their skill at it. Be sure that your assignments (both for practice and for grading) engage students in the kind of knowing or understanding that will be useful to them in future courses and in application to real life.

Grading student work is rarely easy. In some cases, you can simply count the number of factual or simple items done correctly, but understanding measured by a more complex performance will need to be judged. Walvoord and Anderson (2010) outline strategies for grading in various fields. They claim that establishing a set of clear criteria ahead of time will make grading easier for a teacher, more consistent across students, and even faster to get done. The key is to think through the range of feedback you want to give (e.g., points from 1 to 10 or letters from A to F) and identify how you would recognize or characterize a performance in each category. What are the strengths of an answer at each level, and what might be missing that would keep it from being in a higher category? What are the habits of mind or the kinds of knowledge demonstrated that characterize levels of understanding?

When you engage in this kind of thinking, your work giving feedback will be less challenging and more efficient. If you then share those criteria with your students, they can learn more clearly what you mean by understanding, and there will be fewer occasions for disagreement about feedback. Ambiguous or unstated criteria are
a common cause of conflict and frustration for students. Investing time up front to think through your grading criteria will pay dividends in saved time and hassle later.

DESIGNING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

John C. Bean (2011) states that writing assignments, particularly essay exams, can help students exhibit their mastery of material, synthesize course material, and better understand the goals and direction of the overall course, thus increasing overall retention and understanding of material. He states, “Essay exams send the important pedagogical message that mastering a field means joining its discourse, that is, demonstrating one’s ability to mount effective arguments in response to disciplinary problems.”

In order for students’ writing in assignments and exams to improve, students need to be taught how to write essays. One strategy is to provide students with copies of essays from previous years’ classes, without any instructor comments. Have students rank the essays from best to worst, and ask the class to list which factors they think distinguish an A paper from a B, C, and so on. After that, explain your grading criteria and discuss them with the class. In that way, students are more likely to internalize these criteria and apply them to their own work.

Allowing students to assess previous writing assignments could also be used with a Primary Trait Analysis-designed rubric. With PTA, the teacher determines criteria for each score within the rubric and describes this in a handout given with the assignment or included in the syllabus. Having students work with the rubric to assess another student’s work will help them understand the assignment and hopefully aid them in their own work.

Other ideas for teaching students how to write essay exams include allowing students to practice writing cogent thesis statements in small groups, thus gaining insight and guidance from others, and allowing students to revise an essay, so they receive guidance and learn strategies for future writing assignments.

Another method for increasing processing of information through the design of in-class essays is including time for pre-writing and synthesis before the essay is given. Some ways to achieve this include providing students with a list of all potential essay questions before the day of the exam, requiring students to create and bring to the exam a crib sheet for each essay question, which they can use to answer the essay questions, or assigning take-home essay exams. All these methods allow students time for deeper critical thinking and organization of their arguments.

For course-specific guidance on developing writing assignments, contact the KU Writing Center at 864-2399 or writing@ku.edu.
EVALUATING LEARNING

Once you’ve created assignments for students to carry out, you’ll need to give students feedback on how well they’ve performed. To be efficient you’ll need to accomplish all your feedback goals with a single consideration of the work. You’ll do this for several reasons. One version of the multiple purposes of feedback in the form of grades comes from Walvoord and Anderson (2010), who identify four roles of the grading process:

1. The overall distribution of grade categories evaluates student learning in relation to course material and goals; the performance lets the instructor (and an academic program) know how well the course has succeeded in generating learning.

2. The grade category of an individual student communicates the level of learning to the students, as well as to employers and to other teachers; it serves as an indicator of individual achievement and likely subsequent performance in the field.

3. Since our academic and employment communities value successful learning, grades also function as a motivation device for students; to the degree that students desire recognition for their work, they will focus on their achievement.

4. Graded assignments also organize course components by marking significant transitions between topics and by bringing closure to particular segments of the class; both students and the instructor know how well prepared everyone is for the topics that follow.

Conventional grading can accomplish these goals when criteria for grading are made very explicit. This would include general descriptions of the kind of performance that would be recognized in different categories of grade, as well as individual feedback on how and why performance did or did not match the features of the grading categories. Research evidence consistently shows that students who receive more detailed feedback on the reasons for their grades improve their performance more than students who simply receive a grade.

In order for grading to be an effective and meaningful part of the learning-centered classroom, it must be part of the teaching and learning process as a whole. Walvoord and Anderson (2010) write that grading must be integrated into all planning, teaching and interacting in the classroom, but that learning must always remain the central function of the classroom. In her essay “On Design and Liberation,” Sharon Bass, KU professor emerita of journalism, remembers grading a student’s 2,000-word essay with a 4,000-word comment. She realized at that point that neither she nor her students had enough time for that kind of help and that
she needed to redesign her course to make grading more efficient and more effective for increasing student learning. By prioritizing what she wanted her students to learn, she was able to pare down the number of course assignments from 15 to four, a move that helped her tailor each assignment more specifically to her learning objectives. This change earned her better reviews from her students, who were able to see exactly how each assignment they completed contributed to their learning. Bass immediately noticed that, with some extra planning, she was spending less time on grading, office consultations, and emails, and that she had more time for her own professional and personal life.

**ASSESS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER**

To assess student progress, try to collect information continuously on student learning and growth. According to Angelo and Cross (1993), the most effective times to provide low-stakes feedback to students are before chapter tests and before the midterm and final exam, so that both instructors and students gain information about areas that are clearly understood and areas that are not. It’s also helpful for instructors to test students early in the term and consider discounting the first test if results are poor; students often need a practice test to understand the format and anticipate the best way to prepare for and take particular tests.

Empirical evidence for Angelo and Cross’ recommendation to assess often was supported recently in a series of studies done by a group of memory researchers at Washington University in St. Louis (Glenn 2007). Their studies showed that giving short quizzes to students early and often helps implant facts in long-term memory. Tests written in a short-answer format proved to be superior to multiple-choice tests in regard to helping students retain information. Other studies cited in the report demonstrated why cramming doesn’t work: When students studied an unfamiliar fact again and again in immediate succession, it felt better embedded in their memory than it actually was. Creating an interval between the times students studied an item led to higher retention rates.

**ADMINISTERING TESTS**

Time-limited assessments such as tests or presentations can be very stressful for all concerned. Especially in large classes that play a role in sorting out students’ future careers, there can be tension and challenges to academic honesty. Whenever possible, it’s best to create testing occasions that avoid some of the tension and potential for abuse. If your tests are mostly at the rote end of the Bloom framework of understanding (see page 5), students will perceive that their primary job is to memorize and regurgitate bits of knowledge; these are the kinds of tests that are most amenable to various forms of unacceptable collaboration or information transfer. Whenever possible, include items that ask students to do

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**GRADING STRATEGIES**

Walvoord and Anderson (2010) have established nine grading strategies to make the task more efficient and effective:

1. Separate commenting from grading, and use them singly or in combination according to your purpose.
2. Do not give to all students what only some need; for example, give unofficial grades to those students who need them, and only comments to those who don’t.
3. Use only as many grade levels as you need; grading work A, B, C, etc. is more time-efficient than grading work A+, A-, B+, B, B-, etc.
4. Frame comments to your students’ uses; if students do not need or want your comments at a particular time, don’t waste time writing them.
5. Do not waste time on careless student work.
6. Use what the student knows. If a student can evaluate parts of her own work, there is little need for the instructor to do so as well.
7. Ask students to organize their work for your efficiency. For example, having students fill out a checklist of completed tasks can save time on worrying about assignment logistics.
8. Delegate the work, such as instituting peer reviews to check for certain issues on papers.
9. Use technology to save time and enhance results.
more than merely memorize. You can even provide the basic information in the question, but ask students to demonstrate their ability to use intellectual skills to analyze the information given. Items that involve written answers present fewer issues than items with multiple choice formats. Exam items that are more complex in the Bloom framework are not as amenable to academic misconduct. That will relieve your testing situation of some tension due to mistrust and avoid the necessity for maximum security procedures.

If you decide to use test performances that lend themselves to various forms of misconduct, then you’ll need to adopt a more skeptical attitude. There are many sources of practical advice, such as alternating forms and mixing bluebooks. See Davis’ (2009) guidelines in *Tools for Teaching* for more suggestions.

**REPEATED TESTING**

An additional strategy for relieving some of the tension around testing is to provide more than one opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding; e.g., students take an exam, but if they’re not satisfied with their grade, they are given the option to retake it. If students know that they can learn from their experience of the first test to prepare for the second, they have less reason to be anxious and less rationale for misconduct. With two tests, you have the opportunity to provide feedback and re-teach the more challenging parts of the work that students showed they didn’t understand well. Particularly in a foundation course, in which your goal is to prepare students for further study in your field, it’s most important that students learn as much as possible. No one benefits from students moving forward in a sequence of courses if there’s still a substantial body of understanding, knowledge or skill that hasn’t been learned.

This strategy has advantages and disadvantages. If more students learn, then grades will be higher and some people will complain the course doesn’t differentiate the best students. With more time taken on testing (and re-teaching), there will be fewer in-class hours for content coverage, and some audiences will consider that a problem. On the other hand, nominally covering material isn’t of much value if the evidence from tests suggests that many students have failed to learn much of it; a tactic that generates more learning is more valuable. And it’s worth remembering that most academic work we care about (theses, dissertations, journal articles, grant proposals) are always done over and over until they reach a high level of quality. It seems odd to presume that students should get one try and one try only for their work.

If you want to set a tone for your course that learning is a shared goal and cheating isn’t a sensible option, using complex forms of assessment and encouraging repeat work will go a long way toward establishing a climate that supports learning.

**TEST DRIVES**

Robert Magnan (1990) suggests taking your students on a “test drive” to help them prepare for your exams. When you design a test, save items you decide not to use. Make a practice test with these items along with instructions for the exam, including the percentage or points for each section or exercise, and have students complete this practice test in class.

This technique has two advantages: You can test your exams and expose students to instructions. If an exam structure is weak, you can improve it before the exam. If instructions are unclear, you can clarify them.

The test drive should include only a sample of test items. Correct and discuss them as a group. If there are several possible answers, indicate which are better and why. If you’ve included essays, ask students to list the essential points they think should be included when they answer the essay question, and then evaluate their responses.

The key is to use the minimum amount of time to get the maximum benefit for you and your students.
When it comes to grading student work, a number of instructors fall into one of two traps: undergrading or overgrading. Some instructors simply mark mistakes or note negative points and give a grade. However, telling students to “clarify this” may be like telling them to “be tall”; they might not know how to do what you ask. Other instructors give too much feedback, spending too much time marking students’ careless mistakes. This overwhelms students and unnecessarily overtaxes faculty members. When you grade, consider how you can help students see why they might have made particular errors, to help them focus their thinking on areas where they need the most work.

Bean (2011) offers four recommendations for grading essay exams. First, don’t look at students’ names when you read the exams, or have students write an ID number [editor’s note: not a Social Security Number] on the test instead. This way, you’ll be able to eliminate grader bias. Second, grade the exam one question at a time, rather than reading the whole exam of each student. This will help with grading reliability.

The third recommendation Bean provides is to shuffle the exams after you complete each question so that you read them in a different order. Record scores in such a way that you don’t know what a student received on Question 1 when you grade Question 2. Finally, if time permits, you should skim a random sample of exams before you make initial decisions about grades. Your goal is to establish anchor papers that represent prototype A, B, and C grades. Then, when you come to a difficult essay, ask yourself, “Is this better or worse than my prototype B or C?”

Another method that works well for grading papers and essays is using a scoring rubric. Developing a rubric requires four steps (see right). The advantage of using rubrics is that, rather than writing out extensive comments, you score the essay or assignment using the rubric, making this an efficient way of grading. Students can refer to the rubric when writing the assignment, as well as use their scored rubric to examine their work’s strengths and weaknesses. This method also increases inter-grader reliability when multiple individuals grade assignments. Examples of rubrics used in KU courses are provided in Appendix D. See Walvoord and Anderson’s Effective Grading (2010) for more about rubrics.

In his book Engaging Ideas: The Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom, John Bean also provides useful advice about developing rubrics, as well as dealing with issues of grammar and correctness (chapter 5) and coaching the writing process and handling the paper load (chapter 15). Copies are available in the CTE library in 135 Budig Hall.
**USING CLASS TIME WELL**

Your teaching will be most effective if the assignments you give are related and similar to the exams and assessments you give throughout the semester. In a similar way, activities that students engage in (both during class time and between class meetings) should be closely related to how students will be evaluated. In general, there will be more learning if students’ in-class activities are most similar to the activities you want them to show you as examples of deep understanding and rich knowledge. There is a place for sharing information in class, but optimal teaching practice is not simply repeating orally what’s written in a textbook.

One of the nation’s leading researchers on higher education practice and theory is a cognitive psychologist named John Bransford (1998). He and a colleague wrote a powerful article describing the best uses of lecturing in higher education, noting there certainly is a “time for telling” students what we know and how we know it. Their research suggests that lectures are very effective tools for learning when the audience is already very familiar with the general topic being discussed. Such listeners are able to process the arguments and examples, and they can evaluate them and re-work them in real time; their experience includes ready recall of what is said and individual re-analysis and consideration. In contrast, they found that novices who are getting their first exposure to material spend most of their energy during a lecture simply trying to recognize what’s being said as they attempt to create a record of the content. Their experience is more like someone taking dictation and not at all that of someone considering arguments or putting recognizable ideas and facts into an organized system of understanding. They’re very unlikely to be able to evaluate or challenge what they hear, or engage in the kind of critical analysis or synthesis that’s so often the goal of higher education.

As a practical matter then, how can college teachers take best advantage of the efficiency and insight characteristic of a good lecture, when most often the audience is made up of novices in our fields? This is an important challenge for all college teachers, and developing the optimal use of class time is not an easy matter. It seems clear that class time needs to be a mix of presentation by the instructor and construction of a meaningful understanding by the student, but there is not one single way of facilitating that mix which is always best.

To get you started in thinking about your own strategy, we begin by describing some of the ways that students can be engaged in the content of a course during class meetings. Any course should include some time that allows and requires students to discuss, analyze, argue or even write about the day’s topics. These activities will be aligned with the performances that are required of

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It took me years to realize that my course content was driven more by the content of books, with 14 chapters miraculously mapping to 14 weeks in a semester, than by goals I had set for the course. Laboring to cover that much content in a brief period left time for nothing but lecture, and ultimately left me with a bad impression of the lecture style.

As I developed goals for my courses, and decided to reduce the scope and increase the depth of my teaching, I’ve returned to lecture as a way of providing depth to material through example and in-class problems. This works best when students come to class prepared through work on their own and have mastered the basics of the material. Lectures add a richness to a simple conceptual framework that the students have already developed through their own reading.

—Paul Atchley
students on assignments and tests, and they will constitute the backbone of the learning activities in a course. The insights and examples provided in lectures by the teacher are woven around those activities to provide context, to give additional examples of professional thinking and analysis, and to stretch the students’ horizons on the topic. In the end, the period of an optimal class meeting will likely be broken into several segments, each with its specific contribution to students’ learning. The variety itself is even an asset, as all human beings have limits to their attention span, and mixing up the activities will sustain better engagement.

ACTIVE LEARNING

Active learning involves implementing “learning experiences in which the students are thinking about the subject matter” (McKeachie & Svinicki 2011). It’s based on the premise that students must do more than just listen to fully comprehend new information: They must read, write, discuss and solve problems. By using active learning, you’ll increase your teaching effectiveness and your students’ learning.

Reading

One active learning method is The Treasure Hunt (Magnan 1990). It’s based on the premise that if you’ve assigned a reading, there must be something valuable in it. Choose several pages or sections, then ask students to find the most important point, idea or argument and write it down, along with a sentence or two justifying their selection. If you choose assigned passages well, you can increase understanding and participation immediately.

Writing

John Bean (2011) suggests several ways to incorporate writing into a class. See the box at right for three recommendations.

Discussing

While the most common approach to encouraging active learning in a classroom is discussion, not all discussions are equal, and there are other methods by which to achieve the difficult task of drawing students into lectures, discussions and readings.

One method asks students to frame a discussion or determine the direction of the discussion. Ask students to identify one question from their readings that they would like to have answered in class. Ask them to share their question with three peers, and then have the group pick one of the four questions to present to the instructor. Allow each group to ask its question.

USING WRITING IN CLASS

Bean (2011) describes three ways to use writing for active learning during a class:

1. At the beginning of class to probe a subject: Ask students to write short answers to a question that reviews previous material or stimulates interest in what’s coming.

2. During class to refocus a lagging discussion or cool off a heated one: When students run out of things to say, or if a discussion gets too hot, ask students to write for a few minutes.

3. At the end of class to sum up a lecture or discussion: Give students a few minutes to sum up the day’s lecture or discussion and prepare questions to ask at the start of the next class.
Problem-solving

Over the past decade it’s become more common for college teachers to punctuate their classes with opportunities for students to solve a problem related to the content of the day’s reading and presentation. The instructor will pose a problem or question that should be amenable to a solution, given what has been covered to that point; students are invited to work for just a minute or two with fellow students to come up with an answer.

In the pre-technology era this was often called Think-Pair-Share. Students teamed up with another person and then told the class what they decided. Many instructors now use classroom response systems (aka “clickers”) to allow everyone in the room to vote for an answer. Eric Mazur (1997) of Harvard University is well known for demonstrating that his students often were not getting a conceptual understanding of physics from his lectures; only when he initiated paired discussions and reporting answers did their work improve. Many practitioners believe that discussion between students produces the richest learning, and a lecture surrounding discussions serves more as a summary than a driver of learning. With or without clickers, this method shows improved learning over uninterrupted lecturing.

TEACHING INDUCTIVELY

Inductive teaching, also known as inquiry or discovery teaching, centers around the idea that knowledge is dependent on an individual’s experience and interaction with material. In inductive teaching, the instructor provides students with problems to solve or data to interpret, and the students eventually recognize the need for facts and skills, which the instructor is then able to provide (Prince & Felder 2007). As a result of this method, students find patterns and applications, explore and extend material, and make connections from the instructor’s examples, thus inductively learning a concept that these examples indicate. This is opposite of deductive teaching, in which a teacher defines a concept and then exposes the class to examples of it.

Structuring your class so that students learn inductively is outlined in Teaching for Understanding (Wiske 1998). In this framework, the role of the teacher is to direct students’ attention and analysis through focused and often ongoing assignments. These assignments should attempt to increase the “uncoverage” of a subject, which requires that the students receive “lessons that enable them to experience directly the inquiries, arguments, applications and points of view underneath the facts and opinions
they learn if they are to understand them. Students have to do the subject, not just learn its results” (Wiggins & McTighe 1998).

This manner of teaching is beneficial for all instructors whose course goals include the statement, “I want my students to be able to think like a _______ (scientist, mathematician, writer, etc.).” Wiske recommends shaping assignments such that they increase in complexity across the semester, as well as move from group projects to independent learning tasks. Learning thus occurs through observation and guided performances, and assessment of students’ increasingly honed inductive reasoning skills occurs through on-going assignments. A culminating performance is often used at the end of a course or unit, which requires independent application of inductive thinking, synthesis, and a demonstration of understanding that extends beyond the learning that was attained from group work.

Four steps should be followed when teaching inductively:

1. Provide examples—From these, encourage students to discover applications and patterns.
2. Explore and extend—Ask students to consider deeper and broader facets of the class material.
3. Make connections—Have students describe how the material is interrelated, then ask them to describe a concept based on it.
4. Offer a conceptual scheme—After students have tried to construct their analyses, offer your own conception that organizes and connects material.

Prince and Felder suggest that instructors considering inductive teaching for their classroom ask themselves a few questions before they begin to make sure this method of teaching, which is accompanied by a number of possible difficulties, is right for the class they are teaching. They should ask if their course objectives ask students to think at a high cognitive level, if they have any experience using inductive teaching methods, if they are already tenured or on a tenure track, and if the resources needed for inductive teaching are available to them.

LECTURING

The appropriateness of using a lecture format depends on your course goals, and as an instructor you should evaluate course aims before determining whether lectures will most effectively achieve your goals.

The strengths of the lecture are that it “can communicate the intrinsic interest of the subject matter, and it can present the newest...
developments” (Cashin 1985). Another strength of lectures is their ability to restructure information into a unique manner, relevant to course directions. Lectures also provide a large amount of material to many students at the same time. Finally, they can be used as examples for how professionals approach an intellectual question.

Negative aspects of lecturing include lack of feedback to students, a presumption that all students learn material at the same pace, and the problem that poorly-designed lectures are not well suited for higher levels of thinking, such as synthesis and application. To overcome these hurdles, Cashin offers several recommendations for improving lectures (see left).

Another way to enhance your lectures is by effectively using a chalkboard, Elmo or overhead projector. Students’ notes are often an exact copy of what appeared on the chalkboard or overhead, with very few additional points or connections. Effective board work highlights and emphasizes the organization required in problem-solving or the evolution of an argument. Remember that even the best students will occasionally lose the thread of a lesson or forget the original objective of a discussion. The chalkboard is their major, and often their only, resource for reentering the lesson. Therefore, be organized, use headings, write clearly, and when solving problems on the board, show each step in a logical sequence. If at the end of a lecture, you can stand back, look at the board, and reconstruct the lecture using what is written, then you are developing good board skills.

Carefully designed lectures can serve as a mechanism for encouraging higher levels of thinking in your students. In What’s the Use of Lectures?, Bligh (2000) addresses how to promote thought using lectures. He recommends the following: Make sure your lectures encourage application and discovery (see Teaching Inductively, p. 14), as opposed to only serving as a platform for the presentation of material. In this way, students learn how to use the information provided to analyze novel situations. Next, ask questions throughout the lecture, focusing on questions that promote critical thinking, not rote memorization (see Leading Discussions, p. 19). To assist student thought, provide a visual display of the presented material, include handouts so students can focus on thought rather than note taking, require students to pre-read material so that lecture isn’t their first exposure to it (see Facilitating Learning Outside of Class, p. 30), and watch your lecture speed. Bligh found that students performed best with thought-provoking questions when lecture material was presented slowly, as compared to when the lecture was presented at a faster pace; a slower pace allows students time to think about material. For more information related to promoting critical thinking, see Active Learning (p. 13).
FINDING A GOOD COMBINATION

One interesting example of a well-balanced course comes from the work of history professor Lendol Calder at Augustana College. He was teaching a survey course in American history to beginning college students—exactly the kind of course typically taught in pure lecture format. His goal was to have students begin to think like an historian, to understand how history is constructed by historians, and to analyze historical artifacts using an historian’s tools. Calder’s solution is not for everyone, but it offers one example of how to combine the insights of people like Bransford (1998) and Mazur (1997) within the practicalities of teaching a course.

There were three class meetings each week. For the first class, students did some background reading, then watched a film or other visual material that set the context for the week’s topic. In class Monday, he gave each person a document, photograph or other historical artifact, and the assignment was to write an historical analysis of it for class on Wednesday. That writing was required; without it a student wasn’t admitted to class. Students spent Wednesday sharing their writing, arguing their analyses, and trying to reach conclusions about the meaning of the document. On Friday, Calder gave a lecture in which he offered his analysis of the artifact and reasons for his conclusions and observations. During the lecture, his students listened as he described his version of the very analysis the students had undertaken. It wasn’t first exposure, they knew a lot about what he was discussing, and they already had an opinion on the subject. For those students, lecture was highly interactive, as they privately questioned, challenged and appreciated what Calder was saying.

Calder found that his students did very well on exams and other assessments, much better than his students did when he lectured only. Lectures were of enormous value to his students, and they were eager to hear them since they were engaged in the same inquiry he was. Still, this is only one way of organizing a class. There are other forms of engaging students and mixing critical benefits of lecture with components of active learning and students’ engagement.

DEVELOPING POSITIVE CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS

McKeachie & Svinicki (2011) suggest several ways to encourage students to be active in the classroom. Create an expectation of participation early in the semester by defining various facets of the course and explaining why participation is valuable. Understand that boredom, lack of knowledge, passivity, cultural norms, and above all fear of being embarrassed may keep a student from talking in class. To reduce that fear, use small groups and help students get to know each other. Ask questions that have no
wrong answers to help students get used to participating. Learn students’ names, and call on them by name. Ask students to write short answers to questions. A shy person will likely respond to being asked, “What did you write?” Get to know students who don’t participate, so you’ll find any special knowledge they may have; ask them to contribute it at appropriate times.

In some scenarios, students may assume negative roles. If we deal successfully with these situations, we can preserve a positive classroom environment. If a student feels trapped and assumes a Prisoner role, be clear about the course’s benefits. Ask the class to brainstorm 12 reasons why they shouldn’t be there. Review this list with them, and tell them you can see why they may not want to be there. Then, promise you’ll do your best to make the course worthwhile and ask students to meet you halfway. Sometimes asking a student to help (e.g., passing out handouts), or talking one-on-one, will bring the student around.

If a student is terribly quiet and assumes the role of Introvert, use small group projects or group-generated questioning. This will give shy students a chance to succeed and may make them more willing to participate in a large group. Most importantly, allow students to participate at their comfort level; forcing introverted students into an uncomfortable situation will probably cause them to retreat further.

Finally, if a student is aggressive and assumes a Domineering role, establish ground rules that discourage this behavior. Use small groups, and rotate group membership and leadership in the groups. Be proactive; if you can tell early on that someone will be a monopolizer, speak privately with him or her. Say you’ve noticed that others aren’t participating much and ask for help drawing them out. This gives the student a positive role to play, rather than a negative one.

If a few students still refuse to participate, after you’ve tried to engage them, keep in mind that many of your students are engaged. “If some students opt out, don’t let it bother you—it’s their loss, not yours” (Felder & Brent 2003). Focus on the fact that most students are engaged, and move forward.

**ENGAGING STUDENTS IN LEARNING**

All of us hope that students will take advantage of the time they spend on our courses to acquire knowledge and skills that can be used broadly and flexibly. For our part, we create activities and organize resources to help students build understanding. However, these efforts will be successful only if students spend time doing the reading, thinking, writing, arguing and problem solving that we make available. In short, students learn only if they fully
engage in these activities, without distraction and with sufficient
time. Yet, many faculty members report low levels of student
engagement, and there’s a growing frustration with the perceived
inability to get students’ full attention to their studies.

As noted in the Introduction, there are mutual responsibilities for
learning. Faculty members need to use well-crafted and up-to-
date teaching methods, and students need to spend adequate time
on preparation and study. Without presuming students have no
interest in learning and without pandering to imagined youthful
tastes, there are ways teachers can make it likely that students will
give time and energy to studying that optimizes learning.

Generating meaningful discussions during class time is the tra-
ditional favorite of teachers, though some instructors feel their
classes have become too big for discussion as a single group. In
that case, many activities can be done in small groups organized
within a class (large or small), in which discussions are held
among a handful of students, often directed toward a particular
aim or focused group product. A third approach grows from re-
search on memory that suggests that the best understanding is one
that’s connected to already existing knowledge. If course ideas
are used in the analysis of topics, situations or questions that are
already part of students’ interest, there will be more engagement
and more long-lasting effects of the thinking and talking that are
done. This last strategy is a form of student-centered teaching. The
instructor starts by asking what questions or social contexts are
most important to students, so that teaching is embedded in those
contexts, not just applied as an afterthought.

**LEADING DISCUSSIONS**

Like other forms of active learning, class discussions provide vari-
ety within the flow of a class. They can be used as a starting point
if you’re teaching inductively; e.g., students lay out dimensions of
a social setting or problem and try to identify solutions for resolv-
ing a conflict. Once the discussion has set the stage, the presenta-
tion brings academic knowledge or understanding to bear on the
setting students identified. An alternative would be to discuss
after a presentation, inviting students to discover ways the mate-
rial aids in resolution.

Leading discussions requires us to maintain a balance between
using our voices and encouraging students to use theirs. Consider
these ideas for sparking discussions:

- Invite students to ask questions related to a reading assign-
  ment, then frame the discussion around those questions.

**IF NO ONE IS TALKING …**

If discussions aren’t going well because no one is talking, con-
sider the following:

- Did students complete preparatory assignments?
- Have I modeled public critique of my ideas?
- Is the discussion focused on an open-ended question of sufficient complexity and ambiguity?
- Have I avoided answering the question I posed, either implicitly or explicitly?
- Have I linked the topic to a critical event in students’ previous experiences?
- Is my talking preventing students from contributing, or is discussion faltering because I don’t speak enough?
- What am I doing to build continuity and a sense of collaborative engagement?

As a variant on this, invite a trusted friend or colleague to sit
in during a planned discussion time in class. Your colleague may
be able to give you additional answers to the same set of
questions after watching you interact with the class. If the
class is very small, the addition of a stranger may change the
dynamics, but given sufficient time, things usually revert to
normal, and you can learn from your friend’s answers.
Have students write their answers to a sentence completion exercise, then share their ideas: What most struck me about the reading was … A question I’d like to ask the author is … The idea I disagree with most strongly is … The part of the lecture or reading that made the most sense to me was …

Ask students to respond to a contentious statement or an illustrative quote.

Have students recall an experience in their lives that somehow connects with the topic.

To increase the number of responses you get, try this from John Woodcock (in Stocking 1998): Break up your presentation, giving students two or three minutes to discuss a question with the person sitting next to him or her. Rather than reporting on their own ideas, ask students to report on their discussion partner’s good ideas. When he tried this, Woodcock found “Three times as many hands went up, and the reports had a consistently better energy.” This can work with any size group in almost any situation.

One strategy that several KU faculty members have found useful is called the fishbowl, a discussion format in which part of the class forms a discussion circle and remaining students form a listening circle around the discussion group. During the class, students rotate through the groups (see left).

In a large group discussion, once it’s moving, keep it going by asking for more evidence or clarification. Ask “How?” or “Why?” Pose questions that link or extend the discussion, address cause and effect, and ask for synthesis or summary of the material.

Other ways to encourage discussion are by affirming student comments and being silent when appropriate. McKeackie & Svinicki (2011) note many lecturers check student understanding by asking if there are any questions, waiting three to five seconds, and after receiving no response conclude everyone understands. But this is often not the case; students just haven’t had enough time to process material. Give students some “hang time” to think.

When it’s time to end a discussion, conclude with a summary so that students know what important points were covered. A summative statement also gives you the opportunity to fill in points that weren’t covered and to praise the class for their responses.

For more suggestions regarding leading discussions, see Active Learning in Using Class Time Well (p. 12).
USING GROUP WORK

Asking students to work in groups is common enough that everyone has an idea of what’s involved, but many people have strong reactions to the invitation to “get into groups.” It’s important to use this method of teaching only when there’s a specific purpose and only when you prepare a well-structured activity. Students are wary of teachers who use group work as a way of dealing with being unprepared, and without clear direction conversations often move quickly away from course content.

Ruth Federman Stein and Sandra Hurd outline several justifications for the use of student teams and group work in Using Student Teams in the Classroom (2000). Besides increasing learning and preparing students for the environment of teamwork in industry and other organizations, teamwork and peer discussions help students more easily construct knowledge that’s built upon their previous experiences (Fosnot 1996).

Group discussions also help students use and become familiar with the language of a profession or discipline. Evaluations of student understandings are usually structured to assess their ability to comprehend questions and provide convincing responses. These skills are more likely to develop if students are allowed to discuss these topics themselves, as opposed to only receiving passive exposure to this new language. At their best, group activities engage students in active use of terms and ideas in ways that complement hearing them used by a professor in a lecture.

Teamwork is also more useful than lectures when teaching practical knowledge or material that’s evaluated based on social context. Finally, Stein and Hurd argue that group work helps students absorb the behaviors and ways of thinking needed for success in the classroom.

To make groups really work in your classroom, Dan Spencer of the KU School of Business recommends following the “Keys to Effective Group Work” he has developed, shown at right. In this model, the group has an ongoing structure and purpose, and there is some effort made to generate a product from the group work. Such projects can generate extremely high levels of engagement when the topic is of importance to students and there is a lot of interaction with and feedback from the instructor. If the group is generating a high-stakes product (with a significant grade attached), there will be important issues in managing the work distribution and providing fair individual feedback. There are many books in the CTE library that address those issues, but remember that the added benefit of serious engagement will require some cost in management of the group process itself. Many faculty members feel the return on investment is very high.

KEYS TO EFFECTIVE GROUP WORK

Create groups (five to seven people each) that are diverse in terms of gender, learning style, interpersonal abilities, class grades, nationality, work experience and type of degree they are pursuing. Also, combine people in groups who don’t have previous knowledge of each other, and who have complementary schedules for meeting outside of class.

Select group work that requires team members to collaborate and that allows as much time for group interaction as possible in order to encourage valuable interactions.

Allow the groups to determine individuals’ roles and the goals of their teamwork. Have the roles of the individuals in the group rotate throughout the project.

Establish classroom behaviors that encourage group interactions, such as the sharing of information between teams and student cooperation during the learning process.

Include evaluations that measure teamwork, such as tardiness, preparation for classes and grades on group work.

Before assigning complex projects, engage the class in icebreaker and bonding exercises, as well as assigning projects that increase in complexity.
To initiate group work in the classroom that doesn’t involve an extended project, try using Listening Teams (see left).

**ENGAGING DIVERSE LEARNERS**

When we talk about diversity in education, often the point is to highlight the general benefits of a world with multiple points of view and many forms of culture; it’s a more interesting world when we have a richer palette of language, music, literature, and traditions. At another level, cultural context is also an asset in teaching. The best learning takes place when students experience new ideas as they are connected to their existing understanding of the world. Learning becomes most flexible, most useful to students when they can see the same ideas, information, or analysis applied across more than one context. A commonly used definition of “deep understanding” is that ideas can be used in a context that wasn’t explicitly taught. The best way to generate such an understanding is to teach the same ideas embedded within multiple specific settings.

As we talk about diverse context, then, we’re talking about both how to capture the attention and focus of students whose life experience is not typical of most KU students, and also about how to promote a general understanding of ideas in all students that isn’t bounded by particular circumstances. Embedding knowledge within realistic settings familiar to students will get understanding started, and asking students to recognize content in unfamiliar contexts will deepen that understanding.

As a first step, we need to make sure that the examples and settings we use in communicating knowledge include a wide range of the typical human experience. Students in KU classrooms are different in many ways: age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religion, sexual orientation, and physical or learning ability. Van Note Chism (2002) reports that studies have found that this type of diversity benefits individual students, institutions of higher learning, the economy, and society. She also reports that several studies have documented ways in which student difference enlarges students’ perspectives, increases their critical thinking, and fosters higher intellectual engagement.

Van Note Chism states, “The weight of past research evidence suggests that faculty members are crucial to student educational attainment: positive in- and out-of-class relationships with their teachers can enable students to overcome constraints and achieve academic success” (p. 131). In light of disappointing retention rates for underrepresented students, teachers can play an important part in the lives of diverse learners. We can make knowledge accessible to students by using examples beyond our immediate

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**LISTENING TEAMS**

Divide the class into four teams, then give the team members different role assignments:

- **Questioners**—This group will ask at least two questions about the material.
- **Agreers**—This group will tell which points they agreed with, or found helpful, and explain why.
- **Nay-sayers**—This group will comment on what points they disagreed with, or did not find helpful, and explain why.
- **Example givers**—This group will give specific examples or applications of the material.

Present your material. After you’re done, give the teams a few minutes to complete their assignments.

One reason listening teams are successful is because each student feels as though his or her contribution is important and sees that contributions are rewarded. Structuring group work with this in mind can increase the quality of student participation and the effectiveness of the group exercise.
lives and concerns. Drawing upon a range of experience isn’t just an exercise; it’s a good way to increase learning and retention.

One easy and valuable way to achieve these goals is to recognize students’ cultural contexts and build examples into your teaching that connect with their lives. That could include references to music, entertainment, and art that are relevant with students, rather than using only references to the work you know. For example, frame hypothetical problems or situations in issues that are relevant to people in their 20’s in the early years of our century, along with the usual examples you’ve generated that connect to your interests and concerns. In doing this, you aren’t pandering to students’ tastes or family cultural backgrounds; you’re making their understanding deeper by using multiple settings for their/your knowledge. At the individual level, you’re also making it possible for each person to find an initial example that’s embedded within familiar places, people and topics.

Think about the classic word problem from math class that many of us know: Toonerville and Toytown are 500 miles apart, and a train leaves each town on a single track, headed for the other town. The Toonerville train is going 55 mph, and the Toytown train is going 65 mph; in how many minutes will the trains crash into each other and where will that take place? This problem is meant to be abstract, devoid of real meaning, so as not to distract us from the mathematical operations that would solve it. That’s a noble goal, but all the research we have on learning suggests that students would both embrace the problem more and remember more from doing it if the problem were framed in ways that engaged them. There are many possible ways to state an issue, and many possible frames you can use. If you engage your students by working to put your intellectual knowledge into multiple examples from their collective lives, it’s a winner all around. They’ll do the work you want more readily, they’ll remember what they learn longer, and they’re more likely to use what they learn in ways that expand on what you taught them.

Since we want students to become more aware of the rich variety of the planet’s people and human geography, it’s good to use context to engage people. We also want students from different cultural traditions who join our community to be engaged by our courses and benefit from our teaching. By building their experiences into our courses, we both communicate welcome and we make their learning more likely. When we rotate our teaching through multiple contexts for the ideas and information we want to share, we get the added benefit of greatly improving the depth of the learning that all our students get.

FOUR KEY MESSAGES FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHING

1. All students need to feel welcome.
2. They need to feel that they’re being treated as individuals.
3. They need to feel that they can participate fully.
4. They need to be treated fairly (Van Note Chism 2002).
MOTIVATING STUDENTS TO LEARN

Generating learning among students is neither magical nor mysterious; students learn best when they spend time reading, thinking, solving problems, writing, discussing, and using ideas in concrete settings or to generate products. Despite lots of research in cognitive science, there are no shortcuts to learning, so somehow teachers and students need to find a way to make those learning activities happen. All of us, students and teachers alike, have many different ways that we can spend our time; we have a shared interest in arranging the academic world so that we put enough energy and time into the courses we co-inhabit.

There’s a rich and interesting debate among academic psychologists about motivation, with ongoing dialogue about the relation between extrinsic motivators, like rewards, and activities that seem intrinsically motivated, i.e., they occur without external support or constraint. There’s one general idea about motivation that receives a lot of support, regardless of a researcher’s conceptual perspective. People are most likely to engage in activities when they believe there’s a reasonable chance of having a good experience. Some argue that the probability of choosing an activity increases when there’s a higher perceived likelihood of good things happening, so raising or lowering expectations of success would raise or lower their willingness to spend time on an activity—thus increasing or decreasing motivation.

In education, success is defined differently by different participants. For us as teachers, students’ success includes a deep understanding of ideas, rich knowledge of the content of a field, and possibly an enhanced appreciation for and interest in the topic of our course. These are primarily intrinsically valuable results of a course, though there’s certainly practical value in being well prepared for further study. For many or most of our students, success will likely be defined primarily in terms of your feedback to them on the quality of their work, typically grades. This is an extrinsic reason for learning, especially from our perspective, though some students come to appreciate and enjoy our fields as a result of their course work. Whichever version of success we refer to, students will give more time to a course in which they believe success is likely than to a course with a lower probability of a good result, either intrinsic or extrinsic.

While it would be nice to imagine that everyone who studies at KU is intrinsically motivated to know the intellectual world deeply and richly, we need to think strategically about motivation. Courses should be planned, both in-class and out-of-class, to maximize students’ beliefs that good things result from their investment of time. If we want to capture their time from among many options, that’s the model to adopt.
SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS

Students will look for indications from you about their success in understanding course work, and perhaps in achieving good grades. To maintain their consistent participation in learning activities, you’ll want to give frequent feedback, especially early in a course. The best way to make that feedback positive is to begin with assignments that you believe most students can do well. A sure way to produce discouraged learners is to create an assignment that only the best students can do. Researchers in teaching talk about “optimal challenge” in assignments, and that refers to work that is not trivial or mere rote application of procedural rules, but not so difficult that students have no idea how to begin. This is a difficult matter of judgment for you, made more difficult when courses have students with a wide range of background skill, but it’s a very important part of your plan to motivate students, to capture their time and energy for your course.

Linked to optimal challenge is the notion of repeatable assignments. If each intellectual challenge you offer is only available once, then students will either pass or fail but not have a reason to revisit the work to learn it better. When assignments can be repeated (with alternate versions of context and particulars), students have reason to work again to refine their understanding. You do want students whose work wasn’t acceptable to study again, and they’ll be more likely to do that if you provide another alternative to get what they want, namely positive feedback from you on their performance. Making assignments repeatable also allows you to keep your grading standards higher, as you aren’t forced to lower your criteria to allow students to pass.

Repeating work until it reaches a high criterion is how we function as researchers, and it’s a good model for producing intellectual success. If you wish to get students to spend more time on your course, then you need to convince them that extra work will result in a successful experience for them.

ATTENDING CLASS

Many faculty members think it’s very important for students to attend class, and they worry about low attendance, especially in larger classes. Typically faculty members attribute poor attendance to low student motivation, without asking about the reasons for that apparent disinterest among students. The Center for Teaching Excellence conducted a survey of KU students in Fall 1999, asking them about their decision to attend or to skip class meetings. The study examined the relationship between course characteristics, student characteristics, and the rationale of students for either attending class or not attending class on a daily basis. The study sought to answer these questions:
1. How do characteristics of students relate to their attendance behavior?
2. How do characteristics of the courses in which students are enrolled relate to their attendance behavior?
3. What reasons do students give for their day-to-day attendance decisions?
4. How do these reasons relate to the number of their absences?

The results of the study suggested that students were actually more rational than unmotivated. Overall they were more likely to attend class if they believed that it mattered to the professor that they were there, or if being present at the class gave them an advantage over simply getting notes from the lecture or doing assigned readings. The professor’s interest in their attendance was inferred from two basic observations: whether class time involved any active participation by students, making the student’s presence essential to the class plan and/or to learning; and if course policy required attendance and placed concrete value to it (more detail below). Many students noted that there is complete overlap between course readings and lectures, so they believe either one or the other is an adequate preparation for exams. While faculty members may believe they’re helping students through content redundancy, in practice they’re undermining students’ motivation to either do readings or attend class.

If a teacher really wants students to attend class, then the class needs to provide a successful experience. That could be something concrete like points for attendance or from an in-class assignment, or it could be a successful learning experience that prepares students for exams in ways that aren’t available elsewhere. There certainly are classes in which the lecture expands on readings and the teacher provides opportunities for discussion or questions, and students in those classes may not appreciate the importance of those opportunities. Pointing out the advantages of attendance to students will help, as will clear and frequent comments to students on the importance of attendance to you. In the end, the best way to motivate attendance is to make sure that active, engaging and unique experiences that aid course success are regularly part of class time.

The study itself assessed variables including gender, class standing, age, grade point average, employment, residence (either on campus or off), cost of tuition and who was paying it, and the number of credit hours the student was enrolled in. A total of 333 students participated in this study, and they had an average of 3.17 absences per class, with a range from 0 to 12.25 absences. Students’ reasons for attending or not attending class are shown in the box at left. Results indicate that students who had higher
GPAs had fewer absences than students who had lower grades. Other student characteristics, such as gender, age, class, residence, method of funding education, or number of credits enrolled in, did not correlate with number of absences.

Students were more likely to attend classes taught by a GTA as opposed to those taught by a professor. The main reason cited for attending GTA-taught classes was “absences above the minimum affect my grade.” One of the main reasons cited for not attending professor-taught classes was “attendance is not taken or does not affect my grade.” Therefore, it appears that whether or not attendance is required significantly predicts whether students attend class. Students also said they were more likely to attend class if the class size was small due to the teacher noticing if they were present, if their presence affected their course grade, and if they had the opportunity to participate in discussion.

Overall, a combination of teacher and student influences affect class attendance, with a large factor being whether or not a penalty exists for missing class. The study concludes, “If students believe they should attend class, are not sick, not tired from having fun the night before, and like the subject matter, and if teachers notice when students are there, take their attendance into account for the course grade, and provide information students must be in class to get, attendance will be optimal.”

THE TENSION BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND GRADING

One of the best strategies for motivating students is to allow (and even encourage) them to repeat assignments until they achieve their own learning/grade goals. This increases their willingness to do extra work, and it also increases the skill level of students who complete the course. Everyone benefits when more students have greater skill upon course completion; they’re better prepared for subsequent courses and they bring greater skill to their future work life.

The downside of repeatable assignments is that more students earn higher grades, resulting in less differentiation among students. Sometimes this is identified as grade inflation, but the general complaint is that it makes it harder to identify the very best students for many legitimate purposes.

It’s very important for each instructor to think about this question by looking at the function of her/his course in a program or curriculum. Sometimes it’s important to sort out the very best from the average students; in such a course it might not be advisable to compress achievement, even if it were at the high end. In other cases, however, especially in foundation courses in a field, the real goal is to have students learn basics so they can study advanced

HELPING STUDENTS TAKE BETTER NOTES IN CLASS

Successful teaching requires helping students understand the best methods to use to get the most out of being in class. One way to help students is to direct their note-taking so it’s more effective. Here are possible answers to students’ questions about note-taking, based on Dembo’s work:

Should I recopy notes after class?
No; recopying requires little thinking. A better use of time is writing questions and answers about material in your notes.

What should I do if my teacher talks so fast I can’t write everything down?
Don’t try to write down everything word for word. Instead, paraphrase, listen for the most important things the instructor says, and leave blank spaces to show you’ve missed material you thought was important. Check with classmates to see if they got the material down.

How do I deal with an instructor who often wanders off topic?
See if your textbook provides a logical structure for the material. Working with other students provides a logical structure for the material. Working with other students can really help in situations like this, too. Form a small study group and together organize notes from class (Weimer 2003).
topics. It doesn’t help anyone, for example, if people leave college unable to do algebra. We’d be willing to differentiate among graduates in some other way if we could be certain that every KU student is highly skilled in algebra. In deciding whether to use repeatable assignments as a motivational tool, each instructor should weigh the relative importance of differentiation and preparation for further study. These decisions may be made well through discussion within a program or department.

It’s always useful to remember, however, that in our professional lives we never hear from a journal or from a granting agency that we have one try and one try only to get published or funded. The common experience we all have is one of a level of rejection, feedback, encouragement, and an invitation to work harder and do better. This seems to motivate us to extraordinary amounts of hard work to achieve our goals. Perhaps we should remember that as we ask why our students sometimes seem unmotivated.

For information on encouraging students’ thinking and understanding, see Teaching Inductively (p. 14). See information regarding helping students read under Facilitating Learning Outside of Class (p. 30).

### USING TECHNOLOGY EFFECTIVELY

#### DURING CLASS

Using technology in the classroom can enhance student learning by increasing the exposure that students get to material, as well as diversifying the formats of this exposure. Technology provides a teacher with more ways in which to present material and aid student learning (e.g. aural, visual, demonstrations, applications). David Brown (2000) states, “The computer assists professors in their delivery of the picture that is worth a thousand words, of sound accompanying text, of attention-grabbing animation.” A PowerPoint presentation of a lecture’s outline can help students see where the class is going and how to organize their notes. Videotaped demonstrations can be used when in-class demonstrations are not feasible, or when presenting the information to a large class that would have difficulty seeing an in-person presentation. Images or videos can be presented to reinforce lectures.

Technology can also be used in class to not only vary formats of presented information, but also to encourage active learning (page 13) and initiate interactive exchanges between students and between the professor and the class. For example, an image or video clip can be used as a discussion starter. Classroom response systems (CRS; also referred to as “clickers”) can be used to initiate discussions: Present a thought-provoking question that corresponds with the day’s lecture material and several possible responses.
Ask students to use their clickers to select their response. Use this information as the platform to start discussion.

Clickers can also be used to implement in-class quizzes, take a poll of student opinions or understanding, and record attendance. Another way to use them is to take a break in the middle of class to gauge student comprehension of the material covered so far. Ask a question that would require student understanding to correctly answer and have students respond using their clickers. In this way, teachers can gain immediate feedback on the current level of student comprehension of material and can shape the direction of the rest of the class accordingly. See Maximizing Multimedia and Technology (p. 51) for more about clickers.

Instructors’ use of technology varies based on their expectations about student learning. If, for example, you give students a handout that allows them to fill in information from a PowerPoint lecture, you may find that students passively record the information and nothing more. The advantages of providing an outline need to be weighed against the disadvantage of inducing passivity. Many times, instructors find that the balance will favor use of the outline, but that may not always be the case. However you use technology in the classroom, ensure that students understand how they’ll be graded for their responses.

OUTSIDE OF CLASS

There are several ways to use technology outside of class to help you achieve course goals. One way to expand on information discussed in class is the use of Blackboard discussion groups. Teachers can use these groups to disseminate class information or to establish an arena in which students interact with one another about various topics or class activities. See the box at right for ways to facilitate online discussions.

Another way to deepen and assess student learning outside of class is to use online quizzes. These can be created on Blackboard, and questions could address in-class material or outside reading assignments. Making the completion of online quizzes worth points in the class will likely increase class participation, and requiring completion of online quizzes over reading assignments before class will increase the number of students who do the readings prior to class. Moreover, online quizzes can be set up in such a way that students can take them multiple times, thus gaining practice working with material and increasing understanding.

For information on how to create online discussions and quizzes, contact Information Technology Services (864-8080).
FACILITATING LEARNING OUTSIDE OF CLASS

There are two issues regarding reading in a course that faculty members frequently mention. One is helping students understand what they read for a course, and the other is the difficulty of getting students to even attempt the reading assigned for a given day. As noted earlier, class time is best spent when students are already familiar with material being presented or discussed, and active participation during class requires that students have undertaken the reading and gotten something from it. For various reasons, many educators see consistent course reading as one of the central issues in assuring quality higher education.

READING COLLEGE TEXTS

Many students believe that they already have a firm grasp on how to read when they get to college. Why then, are students often discouraged by their attempts to read college texts? Ann Cudd (2003) proposes that much of this frustration stems from the fact that they do not understand that the type of reading approach used should vary based on the type of text that’s being read. “You don’t read a novel the same way you read a philosophical essay or a mathematical proof or a poem. Students have to be helped to realize this and then to develop the new eyes they need to see the kinds of texts you assign them,” she states.

Many instructors despair at students’ reading skills, and they spend valuable energy complaining about prior education and standards for admission to college. Other faculty members recognize that achieving their instructional goals will require that they share with students what it means to read in their field, and these faculty members take some time to demonstrate close reading of work typically found in the course. To accomplish this, take a few minutes in class to read a passage aloud, one that students are looking at, as well. As you read, consider the questions at left when you talk about reading with your class.

There can also be homework assignments early in a course that have these meta-questions included in the task; students are not only answering important questions related to a topic, but they’re also asked to identify how they read. That aspect of the assignment would also be given feedback, in a manner like the content portions. In general, when working with undergraduates, it’s not safe to assume that they’re all fully prepared to read professional text with the same eyes as you do; it’s likely worth your time to make your way of reading an explicit part of what you teach.

Other ways to help students learn to read difficult texts come from Bean (2011); he suggests the strategies shown in the table on the following page.
Table I. Strategies to address reading problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ problem</th>
<th>Helping strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Poor reading process                                  | • Give tests or writing assignments on readings you don’t cover in class.  
• Have students write in response to texts (reading logs, summary notebooks).  
• Require students to write and turn in for credit marginal notes on readings. |
| Failure to reconstruct arguments as they read          | • Assign summaries of readings.  
• Have students make outlines, flowcharts or diagrams of articles.  
• Help students write “gist statements” on main points as reading progresses.  
• Go through a sample text with students, writing “what it says” and “what it does” statements for each paragraph. |
| Failure to assimilate the unfamiliar; resistance to   | • Explain this phenomenon to students so that they can watch out for it; draw analogies to other times when students have had to assimilate unfamiliar views.  
• Contrast ordinary ways of looking at a subject and the author’s surprising way.  
• Teach students to play the “believing and doubting game,” so they can see a reader’s double role of being simultaneously open to texts and skeptical of them. |
| uncomfortable or disorienting views                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Limited understanding of rhetorical context            | • Create reading guides that include information about the author and context.  
• In lectures or reading guides, set the stage for readings, especially primary materials.  
• Train students to ask: Who is this author? To whom is he or she writing? What prompted this writing? What is the author’s purpose? |
| Failure to interact with the text                      | • Use a response strategy—reading log, summary notebook, guided journal, marginal notes, reading guide.                                                                                                         |
| Unfamiliarity with historical events, cultural codes   | • Create reading guides explaining cultural codes, allusions, etc.  
• Show students the function of cultural codes by discussing background knowledge needed to understand cartoons or jokes.                                                                                          |
| Unfamiliar vocabulary                                  | • Create reading guides defining technical terms or words used in unusual ways.                                                                                                                                   |
| Difficulty with complex syntax                         | • Have students “translate” complex passages into their own words.  
• Have students rewrite very long sentences into several shorter ones. |
| Failure to adapt to different kinds of discourse       | • Explain your own reading process: when you skim, when you read carefully.  
• Explain how your reading process varies with different genres of text: how to read a textbook versus a primary source, how to read a poem or scientific paper, etc. |
Robert Magnan (1990) is among many who believe that it’s best to help students achieve critical reading skills to aid their analysis and evaluation of texts. It’s better to help students benefit from the reading you assign than to grade them down when they don’t succeed. In the box at left, he suggests ways to support students’ critical thinking skills through reading.

**READING ACCOUNTABILITY**

Given that students are helped in knowing how to read difficult texts, there’s still the question of ensuring that they actually carry out the assignment. To be fair, students often point out that in many classes they take, it makes little apparent difference to them whether they’ve done the reading or not. The instructor doesn’t make them accountable for knowing what was in the reading, and class time is often spent listening to a lecture without interruption. Many professors, they also claim, simply repeat the content of the reading in their lectures, making it seem even less important to take time to read. Since there are few occasions that provide uses for reading, students presume that it can be done later at a time closer to an exam to obtain relevant information. The typical student is not sophisticated enough to recognize that even listening to a lecture would be a much improved experience if the general topic were already a familiar one, so they typically read before class only when the instructor makes it important.

The key to having prepared students in class is to make sure that doing the reading before class is directly relevant to the student’s experience in class. One common way to make reading relevant is to ask students to use what they read in a low-stakes but accountable fashion. Many faculty members use brief quizzes on reading, sometimes for every class period, asking students mostly to report on facts or information found in a reading. This approach has a modest goal, to assure that students have located and looked at the reading. Such a quiz can be given online or in the first moments of class, and it can be graded as participation or for correct content. A slightly more productive version is related to one of the suggestions attributed earlier to Robert Magnan: Provide an open-ended prompt to students, asking them to discuss an idea, phenomenon or analysis from the reading, often in the context of something that students care about. If they can use something from the reading to relate to an issue or topic in their own lives, there’s evidence that the reading was understood at some level, and was done in the first place. People often use Blackboard’s threaded discussion feature for these assignments, leaving a record and allowing students to learn from each other.

Responding to open-ended writing in a low-stakes context can be important, as students will stop making entries in discussion boards when they discover that no one is reading them. To keep

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**DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH READING**

*Use a review as a preview:* Review facts your students already know that relate to the reading. By connecting new information with already-learned concepts, students will be in a better position to understand and remember what they read.

*Give them a bird’s eye view:* Discuss the topic covered in the reading in general terms, but avoid specifics. Students will think the reading is essential, not repetitive.

*Work with the words:* Explain essential vocabulary used in the readings.

*Put questions in their heads:* Ask a mix of general and specific questions that require students to find facts as well as analyze and interpret. Don’t put questions in the order of the text, or students may just skim for words rather than read for meaning.

*Put questions in their hands:* Give them a guide to follow as they read. Make it explicit how you expect students to use what they’re reading in ways that go beyond what’s presented. Use open ended questions that ask for implications or applications of ideas found in the reading (Magnan 1990).
up a meaningful dialogue requires time, so that option raises issues related to resources; for a brief discussion of time resources, consider the material in the box at right. In addition, if your class is large enough that you have GTA help, you should be explicit about their time. A typical GTA position is .50 FTE or 20 hours per week. That means your students’ tuition has paid for 300 hours of that person’s time over the semester. You can allocate those hours across many tasks, including giving feedback on low-stakes assignments, grading, discussion or lab time, meetings, and attending class (as appropriate). If you’re finding it hard to give feedback on assignments in a large class, re-examine your priorities among the many tasks you give. Be certain that you’re taking full advantage of the GTA’s time, using it to enrich students’ learning. When all the GTA time is used, then it’s appropriate to limit additional assignments for students.

Another way to make pre-class reading important is to connect information from readings to class activities. During those portions of the class time that include active learning, make sure that the discussions required and/or the problems to be solved are connected with the reading material. It may be that students need to use something from their reading and something from the class time presentation to address a problem; only by being prepared will they be able to participate fully in the conversation that you’ve arranged. Unlike the quiz options, which can have points or other accountability attached to them, this approach presumes that students will prefer to be ready for in-class activities. Such a method will work well with students who claim they would read if it mattered to the professor, while it may be less effective with students who are indifferent to any outcome other than course points. For teachers who do not want to be constantly grading or giving out points, this is a good way to invite students to read regularly, and it does not take away time in class for giving quizzes. Evidence suggests that you want to make some portion of your class time interactive for students anyway, so making a connection with reading in those activities fits naturally with that plan.

In general, you should presume that most students are like the rest of the adult world; they have more things they want to do than there is time for. Students will make priority decisions about what activities get first attention, and you should think about how you move regular reading in your course toward the top of that list. Low-stakes requirements and/or direct use during class time are good ways to communicate that regular reading is essential in your class. Because effective use of lecture as a presentation method will remain a goal for many instructors, it would be a mistake to believe that simply listing reading assignments in your syllabus will be sufficient to generate a room of prepared learners.

ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS

Limit the number of online assignments you give to those that can be read with the resources available. Online discussions are best done in groups (called threaded discussions in Blackboard). Optimal group size is four to six, though larger can work. Visit each group’s discussion once per assignment and make a single entry, commenting on the total discussion, perhaps with some reference to individual points. Typically this can be done in 15 minutes or less per group. Schedule only as many of these discussions as you can visit. If time allows, increase the frequency of discussion assignments or delve more deeply into individual postings.

Analyze your time resources. In a typical KU teaching assignment, you’ll spend about 15 hours a week on the teaching portion of your job. The work isn’t constant over the semester, so you may think of it as ~225 hours for the semester, roughly 110 hours per course. You’ll spend ~45 of those hours in class, perhaps more for labs or studios. That leaves 65 hours to divide among grading, preparing new materials or class activities, and giving feedback on low-stakes assignments. These need not be distributed evenly every week, and you should literally build them into your calendar so you can be sure that time is available for each assignment. It may be better for your students if you give them frequent feedback on their practice of intellectual work than if you use all your out of class time refining or reinventing class time; you need to balance these two competing demands on your time.
MAKING MATERIAL CLEAR AND ACCESSIBLE

CONTEXTUALIZING MATERIAL

Using existing knowledge to learn something new helps make material clear and accessible. As McKeachie & Svinicki (2010) state, relevant knowledge strengthens new learning by generating meaningful connections to new information. Learners typically use prior knowledge by creating either direct relations, in which they relate what’s known to what they’re trying to learn, such as comparing and contrasting the causes of two wars; or analogical relations, in which they use analogies to help relate familiar and new concepts that share some key characteristics but are different in other ways, such as using a post office to explain aspects of computer storage.

Davis (2009) shares additional strategies for helping students contextualize new information:

- Allow for the fact that different students learn, think and process information in different ways. Students vary in how they learn and how long they take to learn, and they don’t make uniform progress.
- Let students know what they are expected to learn. Emphasize key course concepts and important points in class sessions.
- Give students a framework within which to fit new facts. Use outlines, study questions or study guides to provide a conceptual framework or structure for concepts.
- Present material in ways meaningful to students. Students are more likely to understand and remember new material if it’s already relevant, meaningful or important to them.
- Limit the amount of information you present. Students can absorb only three or four new points in a single presentation.
- Stress concepts, not facts. Too many details overwhelm students; broad concepts are more meaningful and more easily understood and remembered.

QUESTIONS

Question types

Different questions have different purposes. Understanding the different types and their uses can be a big help in structuring and leading discussions and lessons.
Discussion starters get students talking. Examples: Why do you think the AB Company filed for bankruptcy? What’s the issue this case poses?

Probing and challenging questions ask students to examine specific areas of a problem or situation: “What did the data and statistical report suggest?” “Did the president respond appropriately to the situation?”

Connecting questions ask students to make links between old and new information: “What similarities does this case share with a previous one?” “How does this outcome support the theory found in the textbook?”

Predictive and hypothetical questions help students apply what they learn to other situations: “What will happen if we boil the solution?” “Imagine that a primary value for this society was competition—how would that change things in the life of the village?”

Analytical and evaluative questions help students make informed judgments about the subject matter: “Can you rank the designs based on how aesthetically appealing they are?” “Which decision by the president was most effective?”

Summary questions help students articulate key points of a discussion or lesson: “What are the main points of this case so far?” “Can you summarize decisions the committee made their first year?” (adapted from Meyers and Jones 1993).

Questioning techniques

Bob Powers (1992) identifies ways instructors can ask and respond to questions effectively:

Use open questions to solicit responses (see right).

Use closed questions (see right) to end discussions.

Provide correct, clear answers to students’ questions.

If you are unable to answer a question, find the answer and report it back to students.

Answer questions nondefensively.

Occasionally refer questions back to students.

Sometimes guide students to reach answers themselves.

Remember: Don’t ask a question, then answer it yourself.
OBTAINING STUDENT FEEDBACK

DURING THE SEMESTER

Teachers need continuous, accurate information about student learning. Asking students for their input and responding to it can reduce gaps between teaching and learning. Here are two techniques to help you assess and get feedback from your students during the semester (see also box at left).

The one-minute paper is a brief, anonymous feedback instrument you can use up to three or four times a semester at the end of a class. Ask these two questions: “What is the most important thing you learned today in this class?” and “What important question remains unanswered?” At the beginning of the following class, discuss the results with students. Let them know that you’ve read the papers, and respond to their feedback.

In each of your classes, establish a signal for students to use if they want to call a time-out. At that point, you stop talking. Why? Because they can’t take notes fast enough. Because they have questions. Because they need a moment to consider a point. Maybe the best reason is to give them ownership in the class. Think about it: When we read, we stop to read something a second time, to weigh a thought or to verify a detail. Time-outs encourage students and teachers to think about material, to interact, to integrate and to assimilate.

MIDTERM FEEDBACK

Many instructors find it useful to get feedback from students at mid-semester, rather than only at the end. This allows you to make mid-course corrections that can benefit both you and your students. For example, if your PowerPoint slides have too much text for students to read, finding this out by midterm gives you an opportunity to change your slide format.

If you decide to get midterm feedback, follow these principles:

1. Don’t ask if you don’t want to know. If you don’t intend to make changes to a course or an assignment that students are having difficulty with, it’s best to not ask for their input.

2. Let students know that you’ve read their comments and will respond to them as appropriate. Follow through and make changes that are feasible for that course. If students suggest changes that you can’t make, explain why not.

CTE has several feedback forms that can be used as is or adapted to your specific situation. Contact us at cte@ku.edu or 864-4199.

MUDDIEST POINT

The muddiest point is a simple technique that’s remarkably efficient; it provides a high return of information for a very low investment of time and energy.

Ask students to jot down a quick response to one question: What was the muddiest point in _____? In the blank, ask students to respond to a lecture, discussion, homework assignment or instructional method.

This technique helps you know what students find least clear or most confusing about a topic. You can use that feedback to discover which points are most difficult for students to learn and to guide them about which topics to focus on. At the same time, this technique requires students to quickly identify what they don’t understand and articulate muddy points, which engages them in higher-order thinking.
IMPLEMENTING UNIVERSAL DESIGN

There’s a great deal of interest within higher education in general, and KU in particular, that we offer our full range of programs to all capable students. Further, it’s not enough that we offer them, but we want very much to see that students succeed in those programs, regardless of background or identified needs.

Most faculty members are familiar with letters provided by identified students that specify accommodations for their special needs. An emerging understanding about these accommodations is that many of them are valuable enhancements in the way we teach that would benefit all learners. Instead of seeing them as disruptions or details to be worried about, some faculty members have added these ways of teaching into their courses for all students, resulting in greater success all around. This observation is the central idea in what’s known as Universal Design.

Universal design (UD) is a concept embraced by various groups: architects, special educators, AARP, and technologists, to name a few. Ron Mace, who coined the term, defined it as “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (udinstitute.org/whatisud.php). The intent of UD is to simplify life for everyone. Making products, communications and the built environment usable at little or no extra cost benefits people of all ages and abilities. Some of the impetus for UD was to avoid unsightly add-on architectural fixes for inaccessible buildings, but in the long run people have come to see that enhanced access built into any activity makes life better for us all.

AN INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE

We all know the expression “It’s not rocket science,” which suggests that rocket science is really hard to understand. Physics teachers have been engaged in decades of research to make it possible for more people to succeed in studying their field. Some of that concern came because certain categories of students were failing physics at much higher rates than other students. The idea was to see if there were different ways to teach physics, while still holding the same rigorous standards of achievement, that would bring all students up to comparable levels of success. For example, women and students of color had historically higher rates of failure in introductory physics (as much as six times higher) than the overall average for college students. Is there a way to teach physics that eliminates those differences?

Many methods have been tried successfully, but one example is especially interesting. It’s called Studio Physics, pioneered by Robert Beichner of North Carolina State University, and it’s a

THE UD PROCESS

Select the course, goals and overall content to which you wish to apply universal design.

Define the “universe,” the group of students who may enroll in your course. Identify potential diversity within the group: gender; age, size, ethnicity/race, native language, and abilities to see, hear, move and manipulate objects, and learn.

Apply UD and standards for good practice to the overall design of instruction (e.g., choose lecture, discussion, cases, online notes and models for delivering a specific topic to maximize learning for students with the wide variety of characteristics identified above).

Apply UD to specific instructional methods and curriculum materials (e.g., assure that the course Web site meets accessibility guidelines).

Develop processes to address accommodation needs of specific students with disabilities for whom the course design does not automatically provide access (e.g., refer students who need sign language interpreters to Disability Resources).

Monitor effectiveness of instruction by gathering feedback from student participation and learning; make modifications based on this feedback. Also include UD questions in the course evaluation and make modifications based on it (Burgstahler 2007).
very hands on, inductive approach to teaching. Instead of sitting in lecture halls taking notes, students work in groups at round tables solving problems with materials right in front of them. It is VERY carefully constructed, not just random hanging out, and the professor and TAs are available for questions, consultation, and mini-lectures. They use the SAME exams as the traditional lecture courses, not a substitute criterion for knowledge, and students in studio classes do as well as or better than students in conventional courses. Most importantly, failure rates among women and students of color were lowered such that they were now indistinguishable from the overall student population.

It’s a classic example of universal design; there was an access problem for some students, the whole course was redesigned, and everyone benefitted. This method is used in many places, ranging from highly selective MIT to community colleges. Beichner examined lots of evidence to see who benefitted the most from having this “accommodation” form of teaching designed to help students who could not do rocket science. Overall the group whose understanding of physics was improved the most were the top third of physics students at MIT. Their gains were the largest.

SUMMARY

No one expects most KU teachers to undertake massive research or redesign projects like the one at NCSU. We do hope that you’ll take advantage of the diverse learners you encounter to keep your methods as accessible as possible. This will include accommodating special needs for individual students, and perhaps asking yourself whether all students might learn better if you taught them as you teach/measure accommodated students.

Your first responsibility is to make accommodations requested for individual students in your classes; that’s federal law and common courtesy. Beyond that, however, each new student gives you an opportunity to ask about your own practices. Are there ways that you could enhance the learning for your students? We often most enjoy teaching honors students or other students who are most like we were during our education years; these are people who learn easily and quickly from abstract texts, who are prepared to learn from conceptual lectures, and whose intrinsic interest in learning requires little motivation. However, students who are more challenging to teach can motivate us to extend our teaching practices so that we can have a broader impact upon the entire student population.

Take time to consider the examples found in these guidelines. The Studio Physics example highlights the importance of inductive, hands-on learning, and it revealed that students who were thought to be unteachable were actually quite capable of high lev-
els of performance. In the section on Engagement we pointed out the importance of embedding work into meaningful contexts. As academics we value the most abstract version of our understanding, but there’s evidence that ideas embedded in familiar contexts are more understandable and approachable than those offered in the most abstract symbols or without context. You can reach all your students better by putting your ideas into settings that connect with their lives and understanding. In the section on Motivation we suggested that there is a place in higher education for offering repeatable assignments; there are times when it is better to have everyone learn than to make differentiations among learners. Research indicates that more students can succeed at higher levels of learning when they are allowed or required to truly master the foundational skills and content in a field. Everyone benefits when ideas and skills are learned thoroughly and deeply, even if the method was originally intended to help those whose background or preparation left them less ready for academic performance.

Universal Design is not the product of misguided government policy or special favors for those who are disadvantaged. It’s an opportunity to see new ways to increase the success of all students and to build them into the fabric of our profession. We’ll design successful new courses rather than put obvious add-on procedures to alleviate barriers in our old ways of teaching.
Representing Teaching

In some ways, representing teaching is like creating a sculpture: both have many dimensions and take form over time. Your representation will be both a product and a process, so it’s important to document how your teaching evolves over time, including how students’ learning has improved.

Many times faculty members are caught up in the wide range of activities in our work, and we think about representing teaching only periodically. If you gradually build a record of your teaching as you go along, the teaching portion of your documentation can be the easiest part of representing your professional life. The natural rhythm and occasions of each semester require you to create teaching materials, give and read assignments, and provide evaluation to students. If you spend only a few hours each semester capturing a small portion of that work as an archive, you’ll have this representation mostly complete.

This portion of the guide lays out a simple plan that will allow you to create your teaching record in a straightforward way, while also getting useful feedback that will help you accomplish with your teaching what you care about. You can both enjoy your teaching more by taking these small steps, and you can also create the materials you’ll need to bring forward when your colleagues ask about your teaching. You’re already doing 95% of what’s needed just in the act of delivering your courses; the marginal effort to learn from your teaching and share it with others is very small in comparison.

THREE PERSPECTIVES

At a very basic level the components of quality teaching include:

- Identifying appropriate content and goals for a course
- Designing good opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning
- Creating and carrying out an instructional plan of teaching and learning activities
- Creating a social environment in which students are able and willing to engage those activities to good effect.

A previous portion of this guide has addressed those components so you can think about how to achieve your own goals as a teacher. When representing teaching, you’ll want to make those components visible to the people who would care about them,
receiving from those audiences the feedback you need to develop your teaching. Your faculty colleagues are the appropriate audience for your construction of the goals and content of your courses; they have knowledge and experience in the field and can offer useful observations about your decisions in developing a course. Students are the appropriate audience for some portions of course delivery; they engage in the listening, writing, reading and thinking that you arrange, and they can give you feedback on how well they think those activities are delivered. Finally, your perspective is also essential to the representation.

Readers of your work will want to see how your teaching is evolving, both in terms of your practices and your students’ achievements. When you reflect on how well students’ learning is matching your goals, you give an important view into your professional work as a teacher. No one starts out an expert at teaching or research; we get better at both as we learn by looking at products of our work and listening to feedback.

PREPARING TO REPRESENT YOUR TEACHING

AVOID “PEDAGOGIC AMNESIA”

Keeping a record of what you have done, along with notes about why you did what you did, is the best way to avoid what Lee Shulman has described as “pedagogic amnesia.” It’s easy to forget which assignments clearly showed whether or not students understood a key concept. Did grading essay exams take that much time? At the end of a semester, what gaps were evident in students’ learning, calling for restructuring part of a course?

To keep a record of a course, you may wish to compile the items listed in the box at right. If you gather these kinds of materials for each course you teach, you’ll have a complete record of your teaching. From it, you’ll be able to illustrate the trajectory of your teaching accomplishments for your reviews.

MAKE LEARNING VISIBLE TO YOUR TEACHING COMMUNITY

After a course, a successful teacher takes evidence of learning found in student work and reflects upon what it says about the course. It’s challenging to identify weaknesses in an instructional design and plan changes that might benefit future students. In many cases, this involves making the results of our teaching public and seeking comment from others, much as we do in other parts of our creative lives. Peer review of teaching provides an occasion for examining the intellectual work of teaching, including constructive feedback on that work from professional peers.

In the process of offering a typical course you’ll likely spend about 50 hours in contact with students (in class, labs, studios, or con-
Sultations), and probably the same amount of time outside class in preparation, reading student work, and general course management. Rather than discard the products of that substantial amount of time, it’s very useful to set aside half a day to write down your impressions of a course. You could comment on which topics or issues you would emphasize more or de-emphasize in your next offering. You could discuss how well you felt the assignments, projects, and exams represented the skills and knowledge you hoped to see in your students. Making notes about such changes is best accomplished right after the course is over, while the ideas and experiences are still fresh in your mind. Another option is to keep a running journal, jotting down notes during the semester. You also can save a random but representative sample of student work as an archive of what you and they accomplished together (see Student Consent Form in Appendix A). It’s disheartening to a teacher to think that after years of teaching there has been no progress in advancing students’ understanding of our field. If you have a small but accessible record of some key performances from several offerings of a course, you can review them for any trends. Maybe you see some consistent problems that you can address with more time, different materials, or additional practice. Maybe you see some improvement over time that was not apparent to you in the midst of delivering courses. Ultimately this is why we teach, to help students appreciate and understand our fields as we do, and having a small archive allows you to see how you are doing in a longer perspective.

Whatever your field of research or creative activity, you keep archives of your work. You have tapes of performances, examples of studio work, lab data, notes from library visits or interviews; in many ways you capture the important products of your inquiry into your field. Given the amount of time you likely spend each semester on teaching (probably more than 200 hours total for two courses), it would be a shame to lose all the benefits of that work by not developing some record of what was accomplished. The syllabi, assignments, and student work are done anyway, so you should not simply throw them away. Adding a half-day of reflection and writing, to capture your insights at the moment of greatest understanding, is a wise investment. It will help you grow as a teacher and achieve your goals, and ultimately those reflections can document your intellectual work as a teacher.

In Appendix B, we include a document titled “Course Notes,” which is a page of prompts you could use to guide that consolidation of your teaching experience at the end of a course. You likely would not do this for every course, every semester, but picking a single course you teach frequently would give you an opportunity to learn from your teaching and to show your colleagues the intellectual skill you bring to your teaching.
TEACHING REVIEWS

PREPARING FOR REVIEWS

Self-reflection

The guidelines for evaluation of teaching at KU include prompts for reflecting on your teaching. For both the Progress Toward Tenure Review and the Review for Promotion and Tenure, you will be asked to describe your philosophy of Classroom Teaching by addressing “the primary subjects you teach and, using one or two courses as examples, discuss how you organize material and activities to help students achieve course goals, how you assess their achievement of those goals, and how your teaching experiences (including feedback from student evaluations) have shaped your ongoing goals and practices as a teacher.” Your answers to these questions will form the basis of the self-reflection portion of your teaching representation.

You can see that these questions mirror the kind of consideration of your teaching that’s been highlighted in this book. If you’ve been taking time each semester to think back on a course, you’ll have this already done. It’s most important to show the growth of a course, rather than document every aspect of every course. By capturing the essence of how a course has changed over multiple offerings, you provide your colleagues with a good representation of your thinking, planning, and growing as a teacher.

Course narratives

Many faculty members find it useful to write course narratives as part of their preparation for reviews. The goal of a course narrative is to describe student learning-driven practice within one course (or multiple offerings of a course). Consider these prompts when constructing your narrative:

1. Course goals: What are your intellectual goals for the course?

2. Implementation: How do your assignments and course activities connect to these goals?

3. Student performance: How do you know when your students have met the goals?

4. Reflections: What did you (or will you) do in future offerings if students do meet the intellectual goals? If they do not?

What sorts of evidence could you use to address question #3?

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Your teaching portfolio should include these items:

1. Annotated syllabus describing course content
2. Short description of reasons for decisions about content and goals
3. Elaboration of instructional design
4. Examples of assignments and of student work on those assignments
5. Reflection on students’ achievements and plans for future course offerings

Essential items are the syllabus, examples of assignments and student work on those assignments, and your reflections on students’ learning and plans for future course offerings.
Evidence of student learning—tracking/analyzing performance on particular types of assignments or on individual dimensions of assignments (rubrics are particularly useful for this purpose) often lead to greater insights than grades.

Student feedback—mid-semester evaluations; observations of student engagement, participation, attendance; end-of-semester evaluations.

See Appendix B for a sample course narrative.

Peer review of teaching

When most people hear the term “peer review of teaching,” they often think of someone visiting a class and writing a report on whether the lecture was clear and whether students were paying attention (or asleep). Our view at KU is that there’s much more to teaching than holding people’s attention while talking non-stop. As this workbook has suggested, there’s much to designing class time, assignments, feedback, and practice that can make a course successful. In many cases, there will be time spent with students in which the teacher appears to be doing nothing but listening and occasionally commenting. There is a story about a department chair making the obligatory classroom visit to a young faculty member, and he was surprised to see students working together, sometimes sharing with other groups or with the whole class, and interacting individually with the professor. After 20 minutes he said to the professor, “It’s OK, I’ll come back sometime when you’re teaching.” Peer review of teaching should include a detailed analysis of the professor’s plan for learning, including material selection, targeted goals for students, methods of measuring learning, indicators of success in learning, and use of time with students during scheduled classes, studios, and labs.

Guidelines for evaluation of teaching at KU include a section for peer review that’s drawn from reading and discussing a portfolio of course materials. See the box on page 43 for items to include. Peer reviewers focus on four areas: quality of intellectual content, nature of teaching practices, quality of student understanding, and evidence of how your teaching is changing over time. See the box at left for questions a colleague could ask when looking through your portfolio and talking with you.

It’s very important that you make these materials available to colleagues early in your time at KU, so you can get constructive feedback as your courses evolve. Obviously, this helps you become more skilled as a teacher, but it also helps you learn how to represent your teaching. It would be foolish to wait until just before a professional review to send out a research manuscript for review, hoping it will win audience approval. We all know that we learn a lot about the quality of our work and about how we write about
it by sharing manuscripts with critical audiences early and often. So it is with teaching. Share your semester-by-semester reflections on teaching with colleagues, getting their reactions to what you do and how you learn from it. If you’ve done this once a year, you’ll find preparation of your teaching materials for review to be easy.

Additional material for peer reviews can be found in Appendix B (“KU Guidelines for Peer Review” and “Peer Review FAQ”).

Student voice

Student evaluations of teaching are an important part of the feedback that faculty members receive. The Kansas Board of Regents requires that student evaluations include questions about students’ perception of delivery of instruction, assessment of learning, availability of faculty members to students, and whether course goals and objectives were met. At KU, departments use various forms to obtain this feedback. Check with your unit chair for a copy of the form used in your department.

It’s crucial that we learn to read student feedback. KU has moved away from asking students to give an overall rating of a teacher, instead asking students to answer questions about specific features of a teacher’s performance. Whether or not they’re learning will be examined by looking at their work, not their impressions. Students are a good audience to tell us if we’re clear, accessible, respectful, or timely. They may also be able to tell us if the activities we give them are well aligned with the ways we evaluate their learning. These and similar questions can help us see ourselves through the eyes of others, and these are important others. We’re asking them to do a lot of work, and it’s useful to have a cooperative relationship with our students.

A copy of the current student survey of teaching form, along with a corresponding report form, is provided in Appendix B, as well as information about open-ended student comments to guide improvement of teaching.

UNIVERSITY REVIEWS

Annual review

KU requires that each faculty member be evaluated annually using criteria and methods appropriate to his or her unit for teaching, scholarship, and service. Specific criteria and procedures are identified in each department’s faculty evaluation plan. (See Section B in the Handbook for Faculty and Other Unclassified Staff.) It’s best to consult with senior colleagues and your department chair to know what’s expected within the unit’s review. At the same time, it’s in your best interests to develop early the kind of
Essential Guide to Teaching

materials that will be called for in the campus-wide professional review, so you should also plan to submit early versions of that work for your colleagues’ consideration. Getting their feedback as part of annual review could be very helpful later, especially if it makes it easier for you to present an account of your teaching and easier for them to know deeply how you work as a teacher.

In 2006-07, the Faculty Senate Task Force on the Assessment of Teaching and Learning considered how faculty and other teaching personnel at the University are evaluated for their teaching and for their related scholarship. In April 2007, the task force submitted its final report, which was endorsed by the Faculty Senate. The central principle underlying the task force recommendations is that evaluation should be focused on the development of teaching over time and that assessment of that development should be based on multiple forms of evidence, including class materials, student evaluations focusing on the characteristics of teaching that students are best able to judge, a reflective statement from the teacher, and peer observation and evaluation. Two products of the task force are available in Appendix C: “Activities That May Be Considered in the Evaluation of Teaching at KU,” and “Guidelines for Department Implementation.” For additional information, see www.governance.ku.edu/TFATLFY08FR.shtml.

Progress toward tenure review

The progress toward tenure review is a formal review conducted approximately midway through the probationary period for tenure-track faculty. The purpose of the review is to give faculty members a meaningful appraisal of their progress to date toward earning tenure and to orient tenure-track faculty members to elements of the formal tenure review process. For review guidelines, see www.facultydevelopment.ku.edu/evaluation.

This stage of review is very useful to faculty members, and it’s a perfect opportunity to present a teaching portfolio, along with a substantive review of your intellectual work by colleagues. If you’ve kept end-of-semester reflections on one or two courses, you can combine them into a coherent narrative that indicates how you’ve shaped and developed that course over time. If you include examples of assignments and student work, you can make the case for the success of your teaching in terms that peers will appreciate and recognize. Since the final review for tenure will focus on such an in-depth peer review, it’s very efficient to have done a thorough version of it in the run-up to the tenure period.

There will be consideration of student ratings at this point, but their impact should not be greater than that of the peer perspective on your work. If you’ve been developing and writing about your courses and students’ accomplishments, your peers can offer
a powerful perspective on your work. Most importantly, your writing about your course (the half-day reflection we recommend) should include your reactions to student comments. Faculty colleagues are more interested in how you learn from what your students say than they are in what the students said in the first place. Again, it’s the trajectory of your teaching that matters, and learning from student comments can be a useful part of that trajectory.

Tenure and promotion review

If you’ve followed these guidelines during the years before a review for tenure or promotion, there should be little left to be done at the final stage. The three perspectives are all in place for you to represent for review. You’ve been slowly evolving the substance and process of your teaching by regular reflection. You’ve looked at student learning to see if your own goals for teaching are being met, and you’ve adjusted your methods accordingly. You’ve also listened to the reactions of your colleagues as you’ve shared with them each stage of your development as a teacher. This is not a huge burden, but represents the products of the small marginal time spent summarizing all that you learned from the hundreds of hours spent teaching in a semester. Finally, you’ve listened to and responded to the perceptions of your students, not by having them define the quality of your teaching, but by having them give you feedback on key features of teaching that we as a community agree are helpful in promoting learning.

Ultimately your responsiveness to your audiences will be the most important evidence of quality teaching, as shown in student achievement and in your narrative of growth in teaching. By following the guidelines we recommend and doing the reflection and documentation in small but frequent steps, representing your teaching will be natural and productive rather than onerous.

Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations (FSRR) outlines all rules that govern tenure processes. Guidelines for promotion and/or tenure are found in department faculty evaluation plans and on the University governance Website (http://www2.ku.edu/~unigov/). The most up to date version of the FSRR is kept in the KU Policy Library. See https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/FSRR.htm.

Because granting tenure is such a critical decision for both the faculty and the University, this review tends to be anxiety provoking. However, any faculty member coming up for tenure should be assured that the same good teaching practices and efforts made to represent teaching, which are expected and appropriate for yearly evaluations, are also the kind of evidence that should be brought to bear when preparing for promotion to associate professor. As stated in the FSRR (section 6.2.2), “The evaluation of teaching includes consideration of syllabi, course materials, and other in-
formation related to a faculty member’s courses; peer and student evaluations; a candidate’s own statement of teaching philosophy and goals; and other accepted methods of evaluation.” This list of the evidence and expectations Promotion and Tenure (P&T) committees will have when examining a tenure application should look very familiar to any faculty member. It was the express intention of both the governance committees who wrote the P&T and the administration that the materials necessary for promotion to associate professor be the same kind of materials that any active and thoughtful faculty member should already be preparing in the course of his or her normal teaching duties. So the best way to prepare for the P&T process is to follow all the advice provided above regarding making your teaching activities visible to your University colleagues.

COURSE PORTFOLIOS

A course portfolio represents a teacher’s most effective practices. When teaching is approached as an act of data-driven practice, the course portfolio can allow you to explore how effectively the goals of student learning are being achieved, from your point of view and from the perspective of student work. In this way, student and teacher practices inform and serve each other; this bi-directional relationship is captured in the course portfolio.

The structure of a course portfolio explains course goals, how goals were implemented, how student performance was achieved, and the teacher’s reflection on what was achieved and what can be bettered in future offerings. A richer portfolio tracks a course’s evolution, showing what was learned and improved over time. In contrast to other reviews, students’ voice and performance is evident through student work, not through student ratings. Also, instead of a generalized teaching statement, the reflections of the teacher are encompassed in an in-depth analysis of his or her teaching and future teaching goals (Bernstein 2006).

As members of an intellectual community, we’re happy when we can share our research. It’s valuable for colleagues to learn from our work and build on it, and we’re also proud to know we’ve accomplished something others find worthwhile. There may be a time when you feel that way about your teaching, as well, and KU has a way for you to share your accomplishments. CTE provides a number of faculty groups that share the products and insights of their teaching, and we work with faculty members to represent those in an electronic gallery. If you wish to share your work, we’ll help you create a course portfolio for our Web site.
FACULTY MENTORING

For mentees

According to Robert Boice, author of *Advice for New Faculty Members: Nihil Nimus*, faculty members from highly rated pairings of mentees and mentors evidenced greater long-term benefits than did poorly mentored or nonmentored new faculty. These are representative specifics for new faculty with effective mentoring:

- Always came close to departmental expectations for scholarly productivity.
- Always exceeded departmental expectations for adequate teaching by year 2 on campus.
- Always were rated, beforehand, by reappointment committees as adequately collegial and cooperative.

Boice also found that new faculty who did not have effective mentors were, to put it mildly, somewhat less successful. Perhaps, then, it would make sense to at least consider a senior faculty member as a mentor for you at the beginning of your career?

Unless your department has a formal program established to pair you with someone, it will likely be your responsibility to choose a mentor, and this is a process you should not take lightly. Boice found that mentor/mentee relationships that developed spontaneously, rather than through a careful selection process, tended to “die an early, natural death” with “no clear sense of which actions and interactions would be most helpful.”

So how do you choose your mentor? Boice offers several suggestions, and you can find a more complete list in the sidebar at right:

- Be patient and meet with several potential mentors.
- Pick a primary AND a secondary mentor. Use both.
- Meet briefly and regularly with your primary mentor.
- Be involved in scheduling meetings with your mentors, and note that all meetings don’t have to take place in an office.

Remember that you may need to put more time into the mentor/mentee relationship than your mentor. Boice found that while mentors who spent an hour per week on their mentee were generally very effective, “For mentees of exemplary mentors, time reported spent on meetings and exercises averaged 2.5 hours per week.”

OPTIMAL WAYS OF ARRANGING MENTORING

Know how useful, essential, and fun mentoring can be.

Be proactive in finding a qualified mentor; you may even have to cultivate your mentor as much as he or she educates you.

Most campuses set expectations higher than can be attained without mentoring.

Understand that exemplary mentors may not be the most obvious faculty members on campus.

Be patient and mindful in selecting/accepting a mentor; wait while you sample the advice and modeling styles of prospects before establishing a formal relationship.

Try to arrange one mentor from a department other than your own, to ensure that some of your foibles are observed by a colleague not on your own P&T committee.

Remind yourself of the actions of excellent mentors (willingness to mentor in active ways, including coteaching) and of exemplary mentees (ready trust, openness, and involvement, once confidentiality is assured).

Let go of perfectionism. Accept two or three mentors, each with different kinds of expertise.

Enquire about outstanding mentors of new faculty. Put your department chairperson in another category, as someone you should regularly ask for advice but who shouldn’t know all your shortcomings.

Expect that mentoring experiences, if done well, will persist at least three years.
Most good mentor/mentee relationships do not happen spontaneously. If a junior faculty member approaches you and asks you to serve as a mentor, it is likely the result of a significant amount of informal research and a careful vetting process. You have been asked to play a crucial role in the future of this person’s career.

What does it take to be an effective mentor for a junior faculty member? According to Robert Boice, “effective mentoring is neither too difficult nor too time consuming to effect in useful fashion.” Unless your department has a program already set up that pairs new faculty members with senior faculty mentors, it is usually up to the new faculty member to pick a mentor. Once this happens, Boice explains, “effective mentoring [takes] no more than one hour per week, on average, for mentors (including time spent in meetings, in preparing for meetings, and in related contacts with faculty/administrators who could help their mentees.)”

If mentoring is taking more time than you planned, it is okay to look for ways to decrease your commitment to your mentee. The most common way is to encourage your mentee to find a secondary mentor. As an added bonus, Boice found that a secondary mentor not only decreased the primary mentor’s workload, but also increased the likelihood of long-term success for the mentee.

Given that long-term success of your mentee is the goal, be prepared to meet regularly for at least the first few years of his/her career. Initial meetings may involve mostly small-talk, but in time these discussions should evolve to include, according to Boice, “direct coaching, even collaboration, in domains of writing, teaching, and socialization.” Remember, too, that meetings do not always need to occur in your office, and do not always need to be scheduled by you. A walk around campus or a quick meeting over coffee can provide a nice change of pace.

Peer Triads

CTE’s Peer Teaching Commentary (PTC) program offers faculty and instructional staff members a way to reflect on your teaching as a process, with support and input from two peers. PTC members meet about five hours over a semester and provide feedback to each other on teaching and student learning. The program provides new faculty members with an opportunity to hone their teaching skills in a time-efficient, no-risk manner. It provides experienced faculty members with an opportunity to share some of the things they have learned as teachers and to discover new ideas they can implement in their courses. For more about the program, contact Judy Eddy at jeddy@ku.edu.

MENTORING GUIDELINES

Robert Boice suggests mentors follow these four recommendations when designing mentor/mentee activities:

- Select activities that are of mutual interest, fit both schedules, and generate discussion. Engage in a variety of activities:
  - Discuss teaching projects
  - Visit each other’s classes
  - Attend teaching seminars and workshops
  - Share course assignments
  - Review examples of students’ work on assignments
  - Talk about classroom issues over coffee, lunch, etc.

- Meet regularly. Without set meeting times, pairs tend to decrease contact when other demands begin to impinge on their schedules.

- Keep a log or journal that can serve as a reference when the mentee is summarizing activities for reviews.

- Be flexible, and allow for creative mentoring.

For mentors
HELPING STUDENTS THINK LIKE A SCHOLAR IN YOUR FIELD

Using your discipline as a framework for learning engages students and enables them to develop practical and cognitive skills integral to your field. To provide a disciplinary context for learning, first identify concepts, perspectives and problem-solving skills necessary for success in the field. Because these may be skills and thought processes that you’ve long since internalized, you may find it useful to observe the approach beginning students take toward material and compare it to your own expert approach to identify the skills new students lack. Next, develop lessons and assignments that engage students in the practice of the discipline. Finally, plan assessments to measure students’ thinking processes and approaches to problem-solving within the field, as opposed to focusing on course content alone.

Additional considerations when planning your course:

- Model the ways scholars work by posing questions at the beginning of lecture, allowing students to pose possible answers, then using lecture material to discriminate among correct and incorrect answers.

- Challenge students to apply the ways of thinking you are teaching to other aspects of their lives; this will close the gap between students’ lived experience and academic disciplines.

- Pay attention to learning as a developmental process as you plan lessons. What differences exist between the kind of thinking we might expect of students who are just beginning study in your discipline versus those who are ready to graduate?

- Design your course to help students think in their disciplines, but also challenge them to question those ways of thinking.

COGNITIVE APPRENTICESHIP

Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989) explain that knowledge of any kind can never be separated from the activity in which it is deployed, and, as such, learning is always situated within authentic activity (activities that are the ordinary practices of a culture). Classroom instruction, then, should be a process of enculturation, by which students learn the tools they need for a certain activity within a context that allows them to see how members of that community—that is, scholars in the field—use those tools.
Group learning is particularly important for any sort of situated learning, as group work is necessary for enculturation to take place. In fact, most work outside of school takes place collaboratively, not in the isolated situations often created within the classroom setting. Students benefit from group work by finding multiple solutions to problems, discovering the many roles needed to solve certain problems, and confronting ineffective strategies and misconceptions (See Using Group Work, pages 21-22).

MENTORING STUDENTS AND ADVISING INDEPENDENT WORK

Mentors are more than academic advisers or teachers. Johnson (1989) defines mentoring as an ongoing one-to-one relationship in which a more experienced individual offers advice, counsel, or guidance to someone less experienced. Jacobi (1991) identifies three components of mentoring: direct assistance with career and professional development, emotional and psychological support, and role modeling.

Most successful mentoring experiences happen when groups meet regularly, set clear goals, and balance friendly discussion with talk about academic matters. The best relationships are built on foundations of shared interests and mutual respect. The mentor/mentee relationship should be mutually beneficial, with each person gaining new perspectives and ideas from the other.

Faculty members new to KU would do well to consider suggestions from Ann Cudd, philosophy and women’s studies:

“One-on-one work with students is some of the most intellectually and personally rewarding work we do; it’s also the most time-consuming. Students need to be mentored and advised if they are to learn the standards of good work in your discipline and how to create that work. Depending on whether they’re undergraduate, beginning graduate or advanced graduate students, they’ll need more or less intervention from you.

There are many course names for the credits students take to do independent work: independent study, directed readings, thesis, dissertation. The most important thing to do is to set the terms of the interaction from the beginning. First, I insist that the student come up with the topic area and describe it

THINKING LIKE AN HISTORIAN

Lendol Calder, a professor at Augustana College, redesigned his U.S. history survey course to move away from the traditional textbook and lecture format to a format that asks students to think like historians. Calder spends three class meetings on each topic in his course. Each meeting is devoted to a different type of historical thinking: visual inquiry, critical inquiry, and moral inquiry (Calder 2006).

On Day 1, Calder uses a film, usually a documentary, to teach students about how to examine images with an awareness of how those images can be manipulated. The questions that students begin to ask during the film discussion prepare them for the following meeting.

On Day 2, students bring to class a three- to five-page essay based on their own questions about primary documents they have read. At the beginning of class, they exchange papers with their classmates while Calder organizes the questions that framed their papers, which they give to him on notecards. Then, the class discusses the questions the students have brought in and Calder introduces a new intellectual skill that historians make so that students can begin talking about history the way historians do.

On Day 3, students take a short quiz over readings from two textbooks. Calder then lectures over the interpretive questions he wants to consider; though he admits that students are “so primed with questions and historical arguments of their own that sometimes it is impossible to talk uninterrupted for long.”
in some detail— independent work should be initiated by the student with some idea of what she or he wants to learn. Next we agree on how much face-to-face interaction we’ll have and what we’ll do each time we meet. Then, we agree on readings and a schedule for handing in work that I’m to evaluate.

I’ve developed two forms, one for independent study and directed readings, another to track students who are writing theses or dissertations (see Appendix A). I give students the first form when they ask me to work with them; it explains what I expect from them and what they can expect from me. The second form is for me; I record students’ topics, meeting dates, work handed in, evaluations made and returned, committee members, dates and results of defenses. I’ve found the second form is essential for me not to forget who’s working on what with whom and what I’ve committed myself to.

Finally, there are two warnings I have for new faculty regarding mentoring and advising independent work. First, don’t take on much of this in a formal way, if any, your first year (or more) of teaching. Develop your courses and observe how others in your department do this mentoring work first. If you do plunge in, then ask experienced faculty for advice. Second, don’t rehash a course your department is already teaching for individual students just because they ask you to. You shouldn’t consider yourself an overflow teaching resource, nor should you take it on yourself to offer a course for a student who, through no fault of yours, is unable or unwilling to take the course offered by the department.”

MAXIMIZING MULTIMEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

MULTIMEDIA OPTIONS

Multimedia can enhance your teaching experience and students’ learning. Classroom multimedia could include Powerpoint, Camtasia screen and audio recording, digital recording, animations, student voting machines, document projection systems, transparencies, film, filmstrips and whiteboards.

Digital multimedia can be stored in Blackboard, a student/instructor Web-based interface for e-mail, asynchronous discussion groups, digital whiteboard, file exchange and storage, scores and grades, blogging, and online testing with secure exam.

CLICKERS

Classroom response systems (CRS; also referred to as “clickers”) can be an effective tool for instruction, particularly in large classes. Clickers are individual, hand-held units that use infrared or radio

FOUR PHASES OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Zachary (2000) describes four phases through which mentoring relationships usually progress:

Preparing—In this phase, the essential task is to clarify expectations and roles to establish a productive mentoring relationship.

Negotiating—Here, mentoring partners come to agreement on learning goals and define the content and process of the relationship.

Enabling—This is the implementation phase of the learning relationship, when most contact between mentoring partners takes place. Both the mentor and mentee should monitor the learning progress and the learning process to ensure that goals are being met.

Closure—This involves evaluating, acknowledging and honoring achievement of learning. Closure provides an opportunity to evaluate personal learning and apply that learning to other relationships and situations.
Modern professors juggle service and research with their teaching responsibilities. Teaching can become quite demanding, especially in larger classrooms. Using multimedia maximizes class experiences and, after an initial expenditure of time, can reduce preparation time.

Multimedia should be coupled with precise learning objectives. For example, you have a class of 150 students and you wish to help them prepare for a discussion. It’s important that students prepare prior to coming to class! Using the testing functions in Blackboard, you can have students take a quiz before coming to class that covers basic vocabulary. You can ask them to have an online discussion in the discussion groups and assign points for their participation. On the day of the discussion, you can download an animation outline for presentation and outline a discussion on PowerPoint. While you lead the discussion, you can digitally record your discussion for student viewing later. After class, have students review the recording online and post observations on the discussion board.

Contact CTE or IT for help on how to design your class experiences to reduce your overall teaching time and enhance students’ learning experience.

—David Pendergrass

frequencies to transmit responses to a receiver. After an instructor poses a question, students use clickers to answer it. Computer software then generates a histogram for displaying the responses to the class. A CRS primarily improves learning outcomes by increasing active participation via individual student responses or peer interaction, by allowing students to answer anonymous questions that help jumpstart discussions on difficult topics, by providing feedback to teachers about how much material students are retaining so that lectures and class activities can be adjusted, and by giving students an idea of how their understanding of the material compares to their classmates. Teachers can also use clickers for mid-semester evaluations of the class as a whole.

However, technology alone doesn’t enhance learning: Instructors need to: plan how a CRS can help meet learning goals, create carefully worded questions, and have flexible teaching plans so student feedback can influence a lecture’s rate and direction.

When used wisely and creatively, a CRS provides many benefits to instructors and students, including engaging students, catalyzing class discussion, monitoring attendance, evaluating student mastery of concepts, adapting lectures in response to student understanding, increasing peer interaction and instruction, assessing student learning from assigned homework, and test preparation. Common challenges are these: Students may resist paying for their individual clickers; instructors must manage technical difficulties; guidelines for lost, broken or forgotten clickers must be established; both students and instructors will experience a steep learning curve for using clicker software; instructors must help students change expectations (they’re no longer anonymous in a large class!); less material will be covered in class; and clicker efficacy depends on the quality of questions instructors ask. Most challenges can be minimized by planning ahead. If you plan to use a CRS, contact IT (864-8080). Another great resource for information and advice on using clickers can be found in the “Clicker Resource Guide,” which can be found at the following address: http://cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/instructor_guidance.htm.

**TEACHING ONLINE**

In many ways, teaching online courses requires the same sort of preparation as teaching face-to-face courses, but this increasingly popular method for students to fulfill degree requirements can also pose great challenges for students and instructors who are not used to a learning environment that can come across as impersonal and overwhelming.

According to Dr. Judith V. Boettcher, faculty who are new to teaching online courses may find these ten best practices helpful:
**Best Practice 1: Be present at the course site**

Liberally using communication tools such as announcements, discussion board postings, and forums communicates to students that the faculty member cares about who they are, cares about their questions and concerns, and is generally “present” to teach. The best online faculty, according to students, are faculty who show their presence multiple times a week, and at best, daily. Setting clear expectations, as to when you will be present and when you will not, at the beginning of a course is very helpful, and it can reduce the need for daily presence if that is not your particular style. Setting regular times when you can meet in a virtual classroom or be available by email or texting, and thus be available—almost in real time similar to office hours, can be invaluable.

**Best Practice 2: Create a supportive online course community**

To develop a supportive online community, design the course with a balanced set of dialogues. This means designing a course so that the three dialogues of faculty to student, student to student, and student to resource are about equal. In most online courses, the dialogue of faculty to student is provided with mini-lectures in text or video or audio podcasts, weekly coaching and reminder announcements, and explanations/interactions with students.

**Best Practice 3: Be clear about how you will communicate and how much time students should be working on the course each week**

This best practice cannot be overemphasized. Include on your course site a set of expectations for how students communicate and dialogue online and how they communicate with you. For example, many faculty tell students that they can expect a response within 24 hours during the week. Often before a major test or assignment, faculty will agree to hold special office hours by computer, being available either by chat/live classroom or email, or phone. In the interests of time and community, it is best to use a tool where responses and content can be shared with everyone and archived for flexibility in access and review.

**Best Practice 4: Use a variety of large group, small group, and individual work experiences**

A community works well when there are various activities and experiences. Online courses can be more enjoyable and effective when students have the opportunity to brainstorm and work through concepts and assignments with either one or two or more fellow students. At the same time some students work and learn best on their own. So, building in options and opportunities for students to work together and individually is recommended.

Kim Glover, KU Libraries, recognizes that in many instances, “online students can feel isolated by the impersonal nature of the online environment.” She suggests that, from Day 1, you build a sense of support into your online course:

- Use icebreakers at the beginning of a course.
- Build relationships with online users.
- Make the course easy to navigate.
- Make short videos of yourself each week, explaining assignments and material that will be covered that week.
Best Practice 5: Use both synchronous and asynchronous activities

When online courses were first introduced, they were almost totally asynchronous—an updated version of correspondence courses. Now we have tools that make it possible to do almost everything we do in campus classrooms. Plus we can often engage learners in collaborative activities, and what happens is recorded and archived and there for review and occasionally revision.

Sometimes there is nothing better than a real-time interactive discussion; other times the requirement to think, plan, write, and summarize is what makes learning most effective for an individual. The variety of activities that are now possible online makes it possible to create many types of effective learning environments.

Best Practice 6: Early in the term (about week 3), ask for informal feedback on “How is the course going?” and “Do you have any suggestions?”

Course evaluations have been called “post mortem” evaluations as they are done after the fact, and nothing can be changed to increase satisfaction or facilitate learning. Early feedback surveys or informal discussions ask students to provide feedback on what is working well in a course and what might help them have a better experience. This early feedback is done early in the course so corrections and modifications can be made. It is an easy opening for students who might have comments or suggestions or questions.

Best Practice 7: Prepare discussion posts that invite questions, discussions, reflections, and responses

Discussions in an online course are the equivalent of class discussions in a face-to-face class. A key difference, of course, is that these discussions are asynchronous, providing time for thought and reflection and requiring written and or audio responses that become part of a course archive.

Best Practice 8: Focus on content resources and applications and links to current events and examples that are easily accessed

Students want to learn anywhere, anytime, and often while they are doing other things. Carrying around large, heavy textbooks and even laptops sometimes feels like an anachronism. Many students welcome content that is mobile and can be accessed via smartphones, iPads, or iPods. For many courses and disciplines, however, textbooks are not yet available in digital form, so this best practice applies mostly to supplementary material and library resources. A reference document with detailed instructions on accessing library resources is included in most courses. Additionally, a key member of the instructional team is the library reference person assigned to supporting online learners.

ONLINE DISCUSSION BOARDS

From looking other people’s rubrics and my experience in using discussion boards, I learned to be very clear about my expectations of how I wanted students to use discussion boards. I used discussion posts to count for participation, check for understanding, and encourage peer learning. I would design several open-ended questions about the topic we were studying that week and would assign students to answer one of the questions by Friday night at midnight. This gave them time to read the material before answering. I gave very specific instructions on their answer. They had to make a strong argument for their answer and had to back it up with references to resources they used for their argument. I then expected them to respond to a classmate’s post. Again they had to back up their response with resources. The response had to be completed by Sunday night. I checked daily for their discussion (you can also set up Blackboard to e-mail you when there is a new post).

I also set up a discussion board for Q&A, so that when a student had a question he or she could post it and everyone could benefit from the answer. It is good to subscribe all students to this discussion board so that they automatically get an e-mail note when something is posted.

—Kim Glover
Best Practice 9: Combine core concept learning with customized and personalized learning

This best practice combines a number of basic learning principles. Very briefly, it means that faculty identify the core concepts to be learned in a course—the performance goals—and then mentor learners through a set of increasingly complex and even customized projects applying these core concepts. Many online learners within professional certificate programs are working professionals. Supporting learners with their professional goals that are closely linked to the performance goals of a course and even beyond the course parameters is a win-win for the learners individually and as a class. How does one do this? Building in options and choices in assignments and special projects is a way to do this.

Best Practice 10: Plan a good closing and wrap activity for the course

As courses conclude, it is easy to forget the value of a good closing experience. By the end of a semester, students are likely to be harried and not take time to do the planning that can reduce stress. In Getting Things Done, David Allen notes that making a list helps us clear the “psychic ram” of our brains, and we feel more relaxed and in control. Once we make a list and schedule, we don’t have to continually remind ourselves of what needs to be done and when. Consider providing a wrap-up list for your online students.

A list of references and more helpful information is available on Boettcher’s website, Designing for Learning, which can be found at: http://www.designingforlearning.info/

WORKING WITH GTAS

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) play a large role in the undergraduate teaching experience, with responsibilities varying from grading assignments and taking attendance to holding office hours, designing and presenting lectures, and writing exams. Given the many obligations that both professors and GTAs must fulfill, positive interactions between them can help all class members have a successful experience. Poor interactions, on the other hand, can negatively impact the effectiveness of the teaching team. Therefore, concerted efforts should be made to ensure that these interactions are positive for everyone involved. Supervising professors should remember that they are responsible for a GTA’s performance. As David Perlmutter discusses in his article “Supervising Your Graduate Assistants,” faculty members need to prepare, motivate, and manage GTAs. Supervisors must find a balance between maintaining rigorous standards for GTA work and remembering that GTAs are students as well, requiring occasional leeway. The key, Perlmutter believes, is to “make a plan, write it out, agree on it, and faithfully and diligently execute it.”
The TA Experience (1993) suggests that an essential starting point is making sure roles and expectations are discussed at the start of a course. When roles aren’t clearly stated, GTAs must infer what their responsibilities are, which can affect their level of confidence and their commitment to their tasks. See the box at left for steps to ensure that GTA time and skills are allocated effectively.

To maximize benefits for you, the GTA, and your students:

Make teaching a team project. Before the semester starts, meet with GTAs and review the course structure and goals. Review the course organization and syllabus, or consider writing the syllabus together. Sharing with GTAs why you made decisions will expose them to the course development process, as well as make it easier for them to address student questions.

During the semester, involve GTAs in class on a daily basis. Require them to attend lecture; this will make them visible to students, provide you assistance with logistics, and keep them abreast of material you’re teaching. To further involve GTAs, ask for their input on your lectures, have them give a lecture of their own, and write/grade exams as a team.

Ask your GTA to be an information source about student learning. Provide GTAs with a grading rubric to ensure quality and consistency of assessment. Meet with GTAs weekly to discuss challenges they have encountered; have them summarize questions they are getting from students that reflect levels of student understanding of course material. Or, ask the GTA to provide you with representative lab write-ups, essays or assignments from their class; this way, you can record benefits and pitfalls of assignments and gauge student progress.

Provide feedback on their work. While GTAs should have autonomy in their classes, most require guidance. Offer to observe classes (as support, not as a check-up), then specify their accomplishments and offer teaching advice. During the semester, meet weekly to discuss issues from previous classes and help them prepare for future lessons. To maximize their development, meet with GTAs individually at the end of the semester. Finally, direct GTAs to resources outside the department that may help them enhance their teaching (e.g., the KU GTA Resource Book at www.cte.ku.edu/resources/index.shtml).

To allocate GTA time and skills:

1. Calculate the total GTA hours you have for the term.
2. Identify the range of tasks the GTA is capable of doing.
3. Rank the order of those functions as activities that enhance student understanding.
4. Distribute the hours accordingly.
TEACHING LARGE CLASSES

Paul Atchley (see right) asks an important question regarding teaching a large class: How does a teacher offer meaningful instruction in a large lecture class? Faculty members who teach large classes face other issues, as well, such as:

- Are there ways to reduce student anonymity?
- How can I make a large class interactive, so that it’s more than just lecture?
- How can I encourage student writing in large classes?
- What types of tests are feasible in large classes?

Instructors of large classes have found ways to meet some of the challenges this particular teaching situation presents.

Val Smith, KU ecology and evolutionary biology/environmental studies, offers these ideas:

“Large classes present a special teaching challenge. Making consistent eye contact while lecturing is much more difficult, except with students in the first few rows, and the likelihood of students using their laptops for instant messaging and Web surfing (rather than taking notes) is greatly enhanced. How do you keep a large classroom audience engaged and actively interested in material? My solution to this dilemma in Biology 152 reflects two key goals derived from my own early classroom experiences with Clark Bricker, who for decades excelled at teaching large sections of introductory Chemistry at KU.

My first and most important goal is to personalize the lecture delivery: I learn the names of several key students, try to learn something about them, and then actively refer to them periodically in class. In Spring 2007, I team taught a course with Chris Haufler. I consistently sat in the same seat throughout most of the first half of the course, which was taught by my colleague. I struck up pre-class dialogs with students on either side of me and got to know them. Later, when I began my portion of the course, I often walked up to and called them by name during my lectures. For example, ‘Mike is sitting just in front of me right now taking notes. Is he thinking about breathing while he is writing? No! He doesn’t need to, because his central nervous system takes care of that automatically.’ In doing so, I tried to make the students feel like they were in a smaller, more intimate classroom setting; that each of them was not an anonymous, faceless member of a large crowd; and that I cared about them as individuals.

Sometimes you have to teach a big class, even if the class should be much smaller.

When I arrived at KU, there was no Research Methods in Psychology course. A methods course is typically taught as a lecture course with lab sections. The size of the lecture course varies depending upon the institutional resources, but the lab sections are usually in the 20-30 student range.

The department quickly approved creation of a methods course when I proposed it, but there was a dilemma: There were not enough resources to use the model of a typical methods course with lecture and lab sections. Further, there were not enough instructors to offer multiple lecture sections per semester. This meant that the class was going to be a 200-person or more lecture section each semester.

How does one offer meaningful instruction on how to do research in a large lecture taught two days per week?

—Paul Atchley
My second goal is to demand active participation. Here’s an example: There’s a strong difference between the behavior of non-myelinated neurons (along which nerve impulses are conducted smoothly and without interruption, akin to an electrical current flowing through a strand of wire) versus myelinated neurons (in which nerve impulses hop from one node to another, more like a frog hopping along a rope). I first asked all the students on the ground floor of the classroom to start a continuous “wave,” beginning with students along the left-most aisle, sweeping across the classroom, and ending at the right-most aisle. I likened this smooth flow of movement to nerve impulses in non-myelinated neurons. Then, I requested that the students in the central section of the classroom remain unmoving, and requested that the students on the right-hand side of the auditorium begin their portion of the wave at the very instant that the left-hand section’s wave ended: The flow of movement jumped over the central section of students, just like a nerve impulse jumps and speeds past the sections of myelinated neurons that are covered by Schwann cells. No one leaving the classroom that day forgot the difference!”

Smith’s suggestion to personalize lecture delivery is a good starting point for reducing students’ feelings of anonymity in large classes. As McKeachie & Svinicki (2010) report, social psychological research has shown that people who are anonymous feel less personal responsibility, which damages morale and order. Also, the distance students feel from an instructor and a loss of interpersonal bonds with a teacher and with other students diminishes motivation for learning. To combat these, see the box at left.

Paul Atchley shares these ideas regarding attendance:

“If your class is a recapitulation of lectures, students will choose to stay in bed, rather than come to your class. While lectures are an effective way to distribute information, one might instead rely on students handling low levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy on their own (knowledge and comprehension) by using online resources such as Blackboard quizzes. Use class time to guide students through exercises to achieve higher levels of learning (application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Emphasize the importance of attendance: if you don’t care, they won’t, either. If you feel you add something to students’ education, then they should be in class. Enforce attendance through whatever combination of carrots and sticks are appropriate for your course. In a large class, taking attendance is onerous, but in-class writing assignments or peer grading of assignments can serve as evidence of attendance. Avoid announcing when graded in-class activities will happen, because you will find that students will show up on due dates, and stay home when they think nothing is due.”
And Atchley shares these ideas re: personalization:

“Have students keep a blog or journal as a class activity. Reading a few of these each week and providing even simple comments can make a student feel that personal touch, and it can help you remember each student inside the classroom.

If you have the opportunity to personalize assignments, it can be a very effective way to motivate students and make the experience more meaningful for them. It is not always easy to do in a large class, but even one or two pass/fail assignments that students are allowed to personalize in some way can make the class more meaningful for a student.”

Mark Haug, KU School of Business, suggests:

Apply theory to real-life cases during class, which makes course material relevant to the student experience.

Have small groups of 2–3 students work on a problem during class; one of these for every 40 minutes of class time is ideal.

Other ways to involve students include in-class debates or interviews, or out-of-class study groups and online discussions.

Many faculty members hesitate to use writing assignments as part of a large lecture course. For formal papers, using rubrics is an effective way to ease the grading load; see Designing Writing Assignments, p. 7. Not all assignments must be formal, graded papers, however. Bean (2011) suggests that teachers shouldn’t feel “compelled to read everything students write, which is equivalent, I would argue, to a piano teacher who listens to tapes of students’ home practice sessions … The trick is to read some of it, not all of it” (p. 99). Using short, informal writing activities such as reading logs or journals or practice essay exams will benefit students. For other ideas, contact the KU Writing Center (864-2399).

In large classes, giving exams presents unique challenges. In a class of 30 students, it takes just a few minutes to hand out exam sheets. In a class of 1,000 students, passing out exams can reduce testing time by ten minutes or more. See the box at right for suggestions regarding exam logistics.

When you’re handing back graded papers, Lowman (1987) recommends asking GTAs (or student volunteers) to take stacks of alphabetized papers to different sections of the room. You can direct students to the section where their paper will be (e.g., last name A-F in the right front corner of the room).
TEACHING STUDIO OR ONE-ON-ONE CLASSES

Teaching individual students occurs in various settings: architecture, music, art, physical education, as well as independent study in any discipline. McKeachie & Svinicki (2010) note there’s relatively little research on one-on-one teaching, but several principles apply:

Allow students maximum freedom to experience successful completion of a task or part of a task, but give enough guidance so that they won’t get bogged down by errors. Learning experiences should move from simple to complex, with steps ordered so that each new problem can be solved.

Students need practice, followed by feedback.

Too much feedback may be more than the student can assimilate. Don’t try to correct everything on the first try.

Feedback can discourage students. Provide some encouragement, as well as identification of errors.

Feedback about mistakes won’t help if the learner doesn’t know what to do to avoid errors. Suggest what to try next.

High-level skills are developed through much practice. One successful performance doesn’t signify the automatization that’s necessary for consistent success.

Practice with varied examples is motivating and more likely to transfer to later performances than simple drill and repetition.

Students need opportunities for self-evaluation with feedback about the evaluation, as well as the work being evaluated.

Cynthia Colwell Dunn, KU music and dance, shares these observations about teaching one-on-one:

“Individualized instruction requires a special set of teaching skills, whether analyzing students’ work in studios, mentoring a graduate student through a research project, or evaluating behaviors in off-campus practica. There are a variety of issues to think about prior to, as well as during, one-on-one experiences that are different from the typical classroom experience.

When teaching one-on-one, it’s important to determine guidelines for availability, as well as setting boundaries for the relationship. In the area of availability, will you establish set office hours or be available by appointment or on a drop-in basis? What parameters will you set for contacting … at your
office, by email, or on your office, home or cell phone? In the area of setting boundaries, will students call you by your first name or your professional salutation? What kind of contact will you have with students outside the arranged time? Will you establish a personal relationship? Will this be impacted by gender or by age? How will you balance professional versus personal ‘sharing’ (i.e., teacher versus therapist role identification)? Both of these areas are impacted by your philosophy and the situation but are imperative to consider prior to and/or during the establishment of the teacher/student interaction.

Approaching your teaching preparation is markedly different in the one-on-one setting. When formatting a lesson, you have to determine what balance of teaching strategies and student engagement is going to be appropriate. Will you lecture or do more exploratory or seminar type teaching? How much will students be responsible for presenting content information? How will you provide feedback—oral, written or both? What types of prompts will you use to facilitate discussion when it is just the two of you? Will you create a learning agreement that functions much like a contract of what the student hopes to accomplish, how he or she will accomplish it, and by when, or will you create a syllabus with pre-established criteria?

Although there aren’t easy, right answers to these questions, thinking about them as you embark on one-on-one teaching can mark the difference between success and frustration.”

**TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Current best practices in foreign language teaching recognize the roles of input and interaction in the acquisition of a second language. Input can be defined as the language that a student hears (or reads) that contains a message to which she or he is expected to attend, and interaction can be described as any conversational (or written) exchange in which the student must communicate with one or more partners. Providing ample opportunities for exposure to input and encouraging student interaction in the target language are at the core of successful foreign language learning. Another consideration for the foreign language teacher is the mission statement of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which states: “At the core of a liberal arts education are research and informed engagement with global issues, multiculturalism, and diverse experiences; these goals represent our greatest hope for a better understanding of differences in the human condition and the potential for enhanced tolerance.” The foreign language classroom is uniquely positioned to engage KU students in the endeavor to become informed citizens of our global community by fostering exploration of the cultural realities of the peoples who speak the language being studied and encouraging students to reflect on their own cultural experiences and practices.
Successful foreign language teaching can make use of a wide variety of practices while keeping these fundamental goals in focus. Based on the experience of foreign language faculty members, several factors can improve the experience for teachers and students:

1. Consider using the target language as much as possible, if not exclusively, during class time. Students have such limited contact with the language that maximizing every opportunity to provide input and foster interaction is crucial. A natural tendency is to switch back to English to take care of classroom and course management, but resisting this instinct will lead to authentic opportunities for communication. Students will attend to the message in the input and interact in order to indicate what they have not understood in the target language, especially when teachers talk about what will be on the next exam!

2. Encourage students to work in groups for a period of time during each class meeting to provide opportunities for interaction. When one instructor attempts to interact with each individual student, no matter how engaging the instructor and active the participation, the occasion for target language use by students will be necessarily limited. In contrast, when students are accustomed to communicating and working collaboratively with each other, the opportunities for negotiating meaning increase significantly.

3. Make use of the wide variety of resources available at KU. Blackboard provides a suite of tools that can be exploited, such as Wikis for collaborative writing and group projects, blogs for journal writing, and Wimba (a tool for synchronous and/or asynchronous verbal communication) for oral interaction outside of class or creating listening comprehension assignments or oral testing from personal computers. The Ermal Garinger Academic Resource Center, an invaluable resource, has a knowledgeable and accessible staff willing to collaborate on projects to foster cultural learning and help teachers with using technology in the classroom. Other resources on campus, such as the International Student Association, work collaboratively with foreign language teachers to facilitate interaction with native speakers at KU.

**TEACHING QUANTITATIVE COURSES**

In a broad sense, a “quantitative course” is one in which mathematical or statistical analysis of quantitative data is a main component of the syllabus or the prerequisites for such a course. The three main issues are placement, technology and active learning.
When teaching such a course, it is essential to understand students’ preparation. High school students enroll at a public state university, like KU, with a wide range of quantitative backgrounds. The first step is to have clearly defined prerequisites for the course and enforce them. Even with enforced prerequisites, students will enter the course with a broad range of skills. The current teaching of mathematics in high schools varies from one school district to another and is different than what most instructors experienced (see NCTM standards reference in the sidebar at the right). It is not enough to require a passing grade in a high school college algebra course; scores on a national examination, e.g., math ACT, are a better determination of required skills. Students should be held accountable for skills required for the course. On-line supplementary material or handouts can be used to help students review the skills without consuming class time.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology should be integrated in a quantitative course. From graphing calculators to Google spreadsheets, there are endless possibilities for using technology. Students use technology daily in many sophisticated venues. Incorporating technology in the course makes the content real and applicable and extends exploration in and outside the classroom. Additional resources (technical support and release time to develop or implement new material) need to be considered in courses where technology has not been used before. If not carefully planned and tested, the technology component could result in a big loss of time and learning.

ACTIVE LEARNING

As with any other subject, students learn better when they are engaged. Learning a new concept or methodology can be developed as a creative process. Students will learn to appreciate the possibilities and constraints of a discipline. Solving problems in small groups is still one of the most effective methods. Different approaches to the same problem should be encouraged and motivated. Students must learn the logical foundations of the subject to insure that they understand the critical certainty of their solutions.

TEACHING IN SCIENCE LABORATORIES

Laboratories set science apart from many subjects. At their worst, labs are viewed as costly, time-consuming, “cookbook” approaches to experimentation. When taught well, however, laboratories can provide a unique experience for students to think like professional scientists, develop skills and techniques important to their discipline, and collaborate with peers.
During laboratories, instructors get to teach with concrete props. While props engage and involve students, they can also distract from the conceptual goals of the class. Clarify expectations early (e.g., “At the end of class the student should know how to set up and operate a .”) and provide adequate opportunities for students to practice using equipment. Ensuring that students possess necessary technical skills will better allow instructors and students to focus on learning the process of science.

Effective laboratories simulate the process of scientific inquiry. One way to achieve this goal is to allow students to design and conduct individual experimental investigations as part of the course. Students can then experience the excitement that often accompanies scientific discovery, as well as practice critical thinking skills necessary for planning, executing, analyzing and interpreting a scientific study. Prepare students to interpret unexpected results by coordinating practical exercises with material taught in the lecture. If students have a solid foundation in the scientific principles that drive the experimental questions, they’ll have a context in which to interpret results, thereby linking and reinforcing concepts covered in both lab and lecture.

Laboratories provide an opportunity for—and necessitate—teacher involvement. Effective supervision will facilitate inquiry, allow instructors to recognize students having difficulties with fundamental concepts, and provide students with crucial links between data and scientific concepts as they analyze their data.

Helen Alexander and Cathy Collins, KU ecology and evolutionary biology, suggest the following:

“Laboratory courses are typically designed to give students hands-on experience in science. Students often like the interaction and small group activities. However, they can get frustrated by long class periods and a sense of chaos if laboratory exercises are poorly designed. Teachers, in turn, enjoy the opportunity to get to know students and teach experientially, but find that planning the course, carrying out the exercises, and grading the reports take much more time than the typical lecture course. Based on our experience, several factors can improve the experience for teachers and students:

1. Clarify the link between laboratory exercises and big picture course concepts. During the planning phase, identifying links will help instructors choose exercises that truly accomplish learning goals; while teaching, such links provide students a context in which to connect isolated laboratory lessons to broader course topics.

2. Time spent on logistics and advance planning are key to successful laboratory exercises. Laboratory classes can be
derailed if procedures or equipment don’t work or supplies are missing. Because students will often have different backgrounds in the course content and other skills (e.g. use of statistics software, microcentrifuge, etc.), preparation of ‘how to’ handouts saves time for students and reduces frustration.

3. Ideally, laboratory classes should teach students to think like scientists by allowing them to pose questions, formulate hypotheses, and design and conduct studies that address their hypotheses. Too often students look for a correct answer because laboratories are structured to obtain specific results. Allow for some portion of the lab course to be devoted to studies that are not cookbook in nature, then take advantage of the small group format to facilitate discussion of unexpected results.

4. Students need rapid feedback, both in terms of answers to questions on laboratory procedures and on laboratory write-ups. Teachers, however, can be overwhelmed by the workload of reading many papers. We can reduce frustration on both sides by breaking assignments into parts that are due on different dates and providing examples of the type of products we expect.”

TEACHING GRADUATE STUDENTS

Based on her research on teaching graduate students, as well as her experience as a graduate student at KU, Ann Volin (2003) suggests that what makes graduate seminars successful includes clear goals, adequate preparation and follow-up. Often professors begin seminar preparation with their experience as a student as the sole blueprint. Augmenting that experience with the following ideas can streamline benefits and increase student learning:

Model your professional leadership. You are undoubtedly an expert about the seminar topic; thus, your presentation of the seminar material should model relevant skills for teaching, learning and presenting in your profession. A seminar offers the chance for you to relay to graduate students the professional expectations of your discipline. It’s best not to assume that students know what these are—make them explicit.

Set clear course objectives. Articulate not only what you plan to achieve for the semester, but also what each session will accomplish so you can judge whether your plan will achieve its intended benefits.

Make behavioral intentions clear. What are your expectations for student learning? Do students know what behaviors, at-
titudes and ideas you hope to address through this seminar? These fundamentals can be taken for granted in a seminar that assumes advanced students, but again, make even these overt.

Structure each class meeting. Allowing classes to “go with the flow,” which may sound like an idealized intellectual process, leads away from course goals. You have limited time for intense learning in a seminar.

Plan student-led discussions. Students can—and should—lead discussions based on papers they have written or topics they have researched. Teachers can coordinate, facilitate and comment on presentations. An interactive format is crucial; there must be a reason for students to attend class instead of reading material on their own. Watch out for sessions that center on a presenter and fail to draw out the group’s expertise.

Encourage students to help each other. No doubt many students are in class because of their deep interest in a subject. By joining their peers, they own material in a way that professors cannot create on their own. Let seminar interactions build upon skills that each student brings to the seminar. Through these interactions, graduate students become each other’s professional colleagues.

Have an obligatory follow-up. Not only do graduate students need the opportunity to practice and demonstrate skills, but they also need feedback. If that feedback exists in a vacuum—for instance, at the end of the semester when there will be no opportunity to correct and modify skills—it’s less than optimal. Figure in a realistic revision that will demonstrate the application of the feedback.

RE-THINKING GRADUATE SEMINARS

In his course portfolio titled “Re-envisioning Teaching Graduate Seminars,” Anton Rosenthal describes how he implemented backward design (see Aligning Goals, Assignments and Practices, p. 3) in a graduate course, “The Global City.” Rather than beginning with a set of readings and expecting students to fit into a “one size fits all” approach, Rosenthal first identified goals he wanted students to achieve by the end of the course.

Since one goal was to prepare graduate students for their professional lives, Rosenthal developed assignments that reflected that goal. Students didn’t write a long research paper; instead, they wrote multiple short papers (five–six pages) that employed methods, theories and sources. For their cumulative work, students developed a teaching unit.

Rosenthal observed students’ improvement in several areas, such as writing, research analysis, understanding journal articles, and performing comparative analysis.

For more about Rosenthal’s work, see his portfolio in the CTE gallery: www.cte.ku.edu/gallery.
COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

In any vigorous intellectual community, people sometimes disagree. Disagreements are part of university life and shouldn’t be avoided. We should, in fact, expect to find different opinions on both matters of fact and matters of value. But everybody has an obligation to disagree respectfully, regardless of their position in the community.

At the same time, it’s important for everyone to recognize the difference between understanding and agreement. Instructors may ask students to demonstrate understanding of ideas the students may not like. Students aren’t required to agree with the ideas, but they are obligated to demonstrate an understanding of what’s taught. In the same way, faculty members can ask for understanding of ideas and facts from their disciplines, but shouldn’t require students to agree with values connected with that knowledge.

One of KU’s main purposes is to sustain intellectual life in its many forms, including:

- Study in and out of class by all students;
- Discovery, creativity and research by students and faculty members;
- Engagement with local and global communities; and
- Open discussion of ideas and issues.

To support this intellectual life, students and faculty members need to talk about what they expect from each other as we all pursue the goals of learning and discovery.

Within the University community, faculty members and students will encounter diversity in age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religion, sexual orientation, and physical or learning ability. As former KU Provost Richard Lariviere stated, the University values and supports openness, pluralism and mutual respect:

Diversity matters at the University of Kansas. It matters because diversity enriches our ability to solve problems and create new knowledge. It is our goal to have the richest possible mix of perspectives, life-experiences, interests, world-views and cultures in our campus community.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

At the beginning of a course, students and faculty members should talk about and agree upon:

1. How they’ll work together
2. How they want to be addressed
3. How they want to communicate in and out of class
4. What their community standards for conduct are
5. What consequences would result if standards aren’t followed
KU is committed to encouraging intellectual freedom, personal integrity and inclusion that fosters an environment that is welcoming to all faculty, staff and students.

The KU community reveres individual worth and dignity, and believes that advocacy for diversity and inclusion is a major responsibility entrusted to all campus community members.

This means that we will recruit and retain a diverse community of faculty, staff and students, as well as develop policies and programs to support a culture of openness, pluralism and mutual respect throughout the University community (Lariviere 2007).

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING

Mutual responsibilities

When a semester starts, students and faculty members should discuss how they will work together. Respectful interaction is a foundation for teaching and learning. Disagreements should focus on ideas or facts. Verbal assaults on fellow students or an instructor are never appropriate.

Class attendance is a privilege. Both instructors and students should follow community standards for conduct, in and out of class. Social boundaries vary from person to person; students should have a chance to discuss their expectations with an instructor and with each other. Students should express their preferences for classroom interactions that support their learning. They should know how their fellow students will react if they don’t meet standards for behavior. Instructors should be very clear about consequences of not following the group’s standards. Students should support standards if consequences occur.

Instructors and students should talk about how they want to be addressed (e.g., “Professor Smith,” not “Mr. Smith” or “Sam”). They should also be clear about how they want to communicate in and out of class (e.g., some students prefer e-mail, some texts; some professors answer e-mail late at night, some not after 5 PM).

Student responsibilities

Whether they’re asking for information or commenting on ideas during discussions, students should respect peers and respect an instructor as the classroom leader. One way to demonstrate respect for an instructor is to come to class prepared and on time.

Students should know an instructor’s preferences for communication and follow them. For example, they should find out if it’s
okay to call an instructor at home. They should understand how often—and how late at night—an instructor reads e-mail, and shouldn’t expect a reply too quickly.

Students should be formal and polite when they’re communicating with instructors, both verbally and by e-mail. Students can be casual only if an instructor explicitly welcomes it. Learning to differentiate among individuals’ communication preferences is a useful social and professional skill, and it should be developed.

There are many priorities in a full life; academic work should be very high among them. Students should have enough time to go to classes and complete assignments. Other activities, for money or other reasons, aren’t grounds to expect reduced time on coursework. KU’s policy is that students should allow up to two hours of study for every hour in class. While some instructors don’t follow that policy, others reasonably expect full preparation. Learning takes time, and students are expected to reserve enough time to complete the learning called for in their classes.

**Faculty responsibilities**

Faculty members should be very clear about how they expect students to perform and participate in courses. During the first week of classes, instructors should discuss their expectations, including acceptable conduct during class meetings (e.g., no cell phones, Facebook, etc.). The discussion could also include specifics about attendance and whether late assignments are accepted.

Instructors should be clear about communication, including forms of address, timing and amount of phone or e-mail contact, and the appropriate degree of formality. Students should be asked how they would like to be addressed in class or in phone and e-mail communication (e.g. “Miss Smith” or “Ms. Smith” or “Jenny”). Instructors should also be clear about how quickly they’ll provide feedback on student work. Ideally, faculty members should return graded work to students by the date promised.

As part of an open class discussion, instructors should explain how they’ll respond if students ignore the guidelines for class conduct. At all times, instructors should respect a student’s right to offer alternate opinions and to ask questions.

Some things must remain areas of instructor discretion, not subject to negotiation with students. These include course content, criteria for measuring understanding/performance, nature and timing of assignments (in and out of class), and use of class time. As with other areas, these expectations should be made explicit at the beginning of the course.

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**KEYS TO FACILITATING CIVILITY**

To facilitate civility, the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and the Center for Teaching Excellence suggest that faculty members and students:

- Talk about and be clear about expectations—how to address each other, communicate in and out of class, and meet community standards for conduct.

- Recognize that disagreements are part of university life, and there’s a difference between understanding and agreement.

- If you disagree with someone, be respectful.

- Support the KU community as we all pursue learning and discovery.
CLASSEHOUSE CIVILITY

KU classrooms should be:

- Focused on learning and communication
- Respectful of diverse understandings
- Committed to supporting learning
- Respectful of all people

The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (see documents. ku.edu/policies/Student_Affairs/Code_Student_Rights_Responsibilities.htm) outlines the rights of students and many of the standards of conduct (responsibilities) expected within the KU community. Within the classroom, according to the University Senate Rules and Regulations (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect6), “An instructor has the authority to set reasonable rules for classroom conduct. When an instructor judges that a student’s behavior is disruptive or obstructive to learning, the instructor can request that the student leave the classroom. Refusal to comply with a request to leave a classroom can itself be grounds for a charge of academic misconduct.”

Faculty members are encouraged to talk with students early each semester to clarify mutual expectations. In most cases, this will help circumvent serious civility problems.

COURSE ENROLLMENT

ENROLL & PAY

Enroll & Pay is the name of KU’s student information computer system. Go to https://sa.ku.edu and use your Outlook sign on to find the Faculty Center on Enroll & Pay. If you have questions, contact the Information Technology help desk at 864-8080.

CLASS ROSTERS

There are two types of class rosters available to faculty at KU:

- Class rosters on Enroll & Pay, Faculty Center (see above), and
- Class rosters on Blackboard, supported by IT (864-8080 or enroll-pay@ku.edu).

REFERRING STUDENTS FOR SPECIAL SERVICES

Setting boundaries with your students is a way to avoid devoting too much time and energy to problems outside of the normal classroom activities. Part of this includes knowing when to refer your students to other campus resources.

Sometimes things occur that are outside your area of expertise. There are people on campus who have a great deal of experience and expertise, ranging from housing disputes to mental illness.

Departments within the Office of Student Affairs provide a variety of services and programs that are designed to enable students to excel academically, such as the Writing Center and the University Advising Center.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Academic Achievement and Access Center help students make a smooth transition to college life.

In addition, students can receive assistance and support through the Counseling and Psychological Services Center, Legal Services for Students, and Disability Resources.

For more information about these resources, see studentaffairs.ku.edu.
CREDIT/NO CREDIT

Undergraduates seeking the credit/no credit grading option for semester-long courses must register their choice in their Dean’s Office during the 21st through the 30th instructional days of the semester. A student may select this option only once during the semester, and the selected class cannot be in his or her declared major. The grade of CR (credit) will be received for grades of A, B, or C. The grade of NC (no credit) will be received for grades D or F. The instructor will not be informed when a student has chosen this option and will assign a conventional letter grade, which will then be converted by the Office of the University Registrar to CR or NC as appropriate. Courses graded CR or NC will not count in computing the grade point average but will be included in the total hours counted toward graduation (see University Senate Rules and Regulations 2.2.8).

ATTENDANCE AT CLASSES, STUDIOS AND LABS

University Senate Rules and Regulations 1.3 (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art1sect1) state the following regarding attendance and exams:

Examinations and tests other than final examinations should not be scheduled in conflict with mandated religious observances. In order to ascertain in a given class if a scheduled examination conflicts with a mandated religious observance, at the beginning of the semester the instructor shall ask students who may be affected to identify themselves privately so that a make-up examination may be scheduled at a mutually acceptable time.

Students with a verifiable medical crisis of a relative or friend may be excused from being present for scheduled examinations and tests. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate discussion with the instructor, prior to the examination/test if possible. The instructor and student shall come to a mutually agreeable method of making up the missed work.

For more information about attendance, see this topic under Motivating Students on page 24.

PRIVACY OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Academic, financial and non-directory information about students is confidential and protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is also known as the Buckley Amendment. Academic information about students cannot be released to another person, including parents or guardians, without students’ written authorization. If a student wishes...
to authorize release of information, see the link under FERPA at registrar.ku.edu/sites/registrar.ku.edu/files/servicedocs/nondirectoryrelease.pdf.

For suggestions on handling student records and information, see the box on the previous page or see www.privacy.ku.edu.

**WITHDRAWING FROM COURSES**

**WITHDRAWALS**

The withdrawal period is divided into three segments. During Period 1 (first 15 instructional days of a semester, or first seven instructional days of a summer session), students may withdraw from a course by canceling enrollment in it. The course won’t appear on the student’s official record.

During Period 2 (beginning the 16th instructional day through the 60th instructional day of a semester or the eighth instructional day through the 30th instructional day of summer session), a student seeking to withdraw from a course must first obtain a schedule change form signed by the instructor (or designee) and, if required, the student’s school. A student who withdraws during Period 2 will receive the grade of a W. This grade will go on the student’s academic record but will not be factored into the GPA.

During Period 3 (beginning the 61st instructional day through the last day of classes for the semester or the 31st instructional day through the last day of classes for the summer session), a student cannot withdraw from a course. The course grade will be determined by the student’s overall academic performance.

After a student completes a course and a grade has been assigned, including an Incomplete if appropriate, retroactive withdrawal from the class isn’t allowed, except in accordance with USSR 2.3.3.

For complete information about the withdrawal policy, see USSR 2.2.5 (https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect2).

**ADMINISTRATIVE DROPS**

In general, students are required to drop class(es) themselves. However, the Office of the University Registrar can process administrative drops when departments publish conditions and circumstances under which an administrative drop will be pursued in the Schedule of Classes for each semester, or departments request an administrative drop when a student hasn’t met published requirements for a particular class or course of study.
Only one faculty/staff person per department should be delegated to submit administrative drop requests. Departments are responsible for attempting to contact students for notification of administrative drops. Refunds may be awarded if the administrative drop is requested during a refund period. The amount of the refund is determined by the date of the request to the Registrar.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Academic misconduct at KU is defined in the *University Senate Rules and Regulations*, as are sanctions that may be imposed upon a student or instructor (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USR.htm#art2sect6). The *Senate Rules and Regulations* also specify that “Every instructor shall make clear, at the beginning of each course, his or her rules for the preparation of classroom assignments, collateral reading, notebooks, or other outside work, in order that his or her students may not, through ignorance, subject themselves to the charge of academic misconduct.”

**PROMOTING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

McKeachie (2002) suggests several ways that teachers can promote academic honesty. See the box at left for these ideas.

**STUDENT WRITING**

To reduce plagiarism, Walvoord and Anderson (2010) suggest intervening early: If you see a proposal, outline or draft of a paper, it’s much harder for a student to purchase or copy someone else’s work at the last minute. This is also recommended so that students receive early direction, as opposed to finding out that they’ve spent many hours on a flawed work. This forces students not to procrastinate until the last moment, as well. Finally, taking time to check a draft helps you reach students during a teachable moment—when they can still do something to improve their work—rather than doing an autopsy on a final paper. It will also save you time at the end of the semester; because students have already received feedback on previous drafts, you won’t need to make extensive comments on the final draft.

Two of the best ways to be prepared for an occurrence of plagiarism is to have a clear policy in the syllabus and to know your department’s plagiarism rules and regulations. For more general information, see the Writing Center’s Academic Integrity guidelines (www.writing.ku.edu) or its list of plagiarism resources (www.writing.ku.edu/instructors/guides) and the Ombud’s Website (www.ombuds.ku.edu).

**WAYS TO PROMOTE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

McKeachie & Svinicki (2010) suggest the following as ways to promote academic integrity:

Reduce the pressure, by providing several opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, rather than giving only one or two exams. Keep students informed of their progress throughout the semester.

Make reasonable demands and write reasonable and interesting tests. If students are frustrated and become desperate with an assignment that’s too long or a test that focuses on the trivial, they may be more tempted to cheat.

Develop group norms that support honesty. Even discussing academic honesty in class helps students recognize its value. Preserve each student’s sense that he or she is an individual with a personal relationship with the instructor and other students. Dishonesty is less likely to occur if students feel that teachers and other students know them, as opposed to if they feel alienated and anonymous.

When you’re giving a test, if a student has wandering eyes, ask the student to move to a different seat where he or she will be less crowded. McKeachie writes, “If he says he’s not crowded, I simply whisper that I’d prefer that he move. So far no one’s refused” (2010).
GRADING STRATEGIES AND DECISIONS

GRADE ROSTERS

Grade rosters are available to faculty by 6 PM on the last day of the semester for 15-week courses. For short courses, grade rosters are available the next business day after the last day of the class.

To access rosters, go to https://sa.ku.edu and use your Outlook sign on to Enroll & Pay. Once you’re signed in, select the Faculty Center to see your grade rosters by term. You must be the Instructor of Record to see a roster. If you’re not listed as the Instructor of Record, contact the scheduling officer in your department, and he or she will contact the University Registrar to make the update. The deadline for submitting final grades is five business days after the last day of finals by midnight.

EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Developing Assignments and Evaluating Learning, pages 5–11, provide a useful frame of reference for evaluating student performance. Note the section on repeated testing on page 10.

University Senate Rules and Regulations 2.1 (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect1) provide the following guidelines about evaluating student performance in a course:

The evaluation of student performance shall be based upon examinations, written papers, class participation and such other requirements as the instructor may determine.

Information about the basis for evaluating students’ performance and about the requirements that students must fulfill should be made available to students, preferably in writing, within the first two weeks of class. Students who are not in class when such information is provided are responsible for knowing it. Students are also responsible for subsequent announcements about course content and grading policies. This information should not be considered a contract; the information may be revised as the course progresses, provided students are given timely notice of such revisions.

The faculty of the College or a school may prescribe conditions under which individual students may be exempted from final examinations, provided that such exemption is based on grades received prior to the time of the final examination.

In cases where part of a class grade is based on attendance, a student shall not be penalized for absence from regularly scheduled class activities which conflict with mandated
religious observances. In cases of conflicts between regularly scheduled class activities and mandated religious observances, the student is responsible for initiating discussion with the instructor to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

The evaluation of student performance is the responsibility and privilege of the faculty. If this responsibility is delegated to a Teaching Assistant or an Assistant Instructor, the faculty member or members in charge of the course retain the right to assign the final course grade.

USRR 2.2.1 also specifies the following regarding the grading system at KU (see https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect1):

The letters A, B, C, D, S (satisfactory), CR (credit), and + shall be used to indicate passing work.

The grade of A will be reported for achieving outstanding quality.

The grade of B will be reported for achieving high quality.

The grade of C will be reported for achieving acceptable quality.

The grade of D will be reported for achievement that is minimally passing, but at less than acceptable quality.

The letters F, U (unsatisfactory), and NC (no credit) shall indicate that the quality of work was such that, to obtain credit, the student must repeat the regular work of the course, or that the student’s work was not of passing quality at the time of disenrollment from the course.

The letters W and I may be given. The letter I shall indicate incomplete work, such as may be completed without re-enrollment in the course. The letter W shall indicate withdrawal for which no credit or grade point is assigned.

The letter I should not be used if a definite grade can be assigned for the work done. It shall not be given for work of a student in any course except to indicate that some part of the work has, for good reason, not been done, while the rest has been satisfactorily completed. When an I is reported, the character and amount of work needed to remove it should be indicated on the Explanation of Incomplete card for the student’s dean.

An I must be made up in the next semester of enrollment, except when the removal of the I involves the repetition of a portion of the classroom work, in which case it shall be removed.

MAXIMIZING STUDENTS’ ACCEPTANCE OF GRADES

Davis (2009) suggests these strategies for maximizing students’ acceptance of grades:

Clearly state grading procedures in your course syllabus, and go over this information in class.

Set policies about late work.

Avoid modifying grading policies during the semester.

Provide many opportunities for students to show you what they know.

Consider allowing students to choose among alternative assignments.

Stress to students that grades reflect class work and aren’t judgments about people.

Encourage students who are performing poorly.

Deal directly and privately with students who are angry or upset about their grade.

Keep accurate records of students’ grades.
in the first semester of residence in which the course is offered. An I not removed according to this rule shall be regarded as a grade of F, U, or NC on request of the student’s dean, with the consent of the instructor, if possible, or the department chairperson if the instructor is not available, and so indicated on the permanent record.

The College or any school may use the letter P to represent satisfactory progress during one semester of work for which a grade will be given only upon the completion of the course or project in a subsequent semester.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Kansas weather varies widely from season to season and may result in class cancellation, particularly during the winter and spring months. In the event of inclement weather that could create hazardous traveling conditions for students or employees, the Provost will make a decision on canceling classes by 5:30 AM and alert the regional news media and the Information Center, and a message will be placed on the inclement weather line (864-SNOW) and the KU Information Center line (864-3506).

**VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

In order to ensure the safety of all its employees and students, the University of Kansas adheres to the State of Kansas Violence in the Workplace Policy, which states that any threatening or violent actions committed on state property against state employees or members of the public will not be tolerated, and could result in dismissal, arrest or prosecution. The policy says that state employees are responsible for alerting their institutions about “any threats which they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.” At KU, employees should contact the director of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity, Ola Faucher, at ofaucher@ku.edu or 864-4946.

Although the chances of a school shooting occurring at KU are statistically slim, it is still important to be aware of the warning signs for potentially violent students or employees. The KU Human Resources web site (http://www.hr.ku.edu/policies_procedures/category_details/index.aspx?category=28; look for “Workplace Violence”) has a link to a report by the Virginia Tech Review Panel that lists warning signs for potentially dangerous individuals. Knowing how to identify these signs, such as violent content in writings and art or a fascination with weapons or previous shootings, could lead to early intervention and saved lives.

**EMERGENCY RESOURCES**

The following three web sites are great resources for emergency preparation:

For emergencies: http://www.hreo.ku.edu/policies_procedures/category_details/14

For inclement weather: https://documents.ku.edu/policies/provost/WinterWeather-Policy.htm

For violence in the workplace: https://documents.ku.edu/policies/provost/WorkplaceViolence.htm
APPENDIX A

SAMPLE TEACHING FORMS
GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY STUDENTS

Professor Ann Cudd, Department of Philosophy

So you think you want to do an independent study with me as guide, eh? Well, here are some thoughts I have put together to help us decide how we want to proceed and to avoid floundering in the beginning phases for half the term. But the first thing to note is that this is YOUR project and YOU will have to do the lion’s share of the work here, both in designing how you want it to go and in motivating yourself to do the work. I am here to help you decide on the scope of your project, give tips on how to find appropriate readings, guide you through the readings that we decide on, and respond to the written work that you do. If these guidelines don’t seem to fit what you have in mind, let’s discuss it. Nothing is ruled out a priori (except immoral acts, of course).

Course numbers and levels
A. Undergraduate students:
   - PHIL 340 Tutorial in Philosophy—This is the thing that students wanting to do an independent study with me during the school year enroll in, provided that I agree.
   - PHIL 600 Readings in Philosophy (summer only)—Ditto above, except that this is done in the summer. Some summers I will not be available.
B. Philosophy majors (in addition to above):
   - PHIL 460 Senior Essay—This is for senior majors who wish to work for departmental honors.
C. Graduate students:
   - PHIL 899 Master’s Thesis—Just what it says. Note that this is not required to get an M.A. at KU.
   - PHIL 900 Research in Philosophy—Independent study for graduate students, any semester.
   - PHIL 901 Tutorial II—This is an official requirement for Ph.D students; it requires the preparation of a paper on which the student will be examined by three members of the department.
   - PHIL 999 Dissertation—Final product of the Ph.D. You’ll work with a director at least a year on this. Choosing a dissertation director is perhaps the most important choice you make in graduate school; make it carefully, thinking about professional, intellectual and personal issues.

Themes and topics
A. General topics that I am competent to discuss:
   - Decision theory, game theory—Various topics
   - Philosophy of economics, philosophy of social science, philosophy of science—Any topic
   - Political or social philosophy—Various topics
   - Epistemic logic
   - 20th century epistemology—Especially foundationalism and its demise
   - Feminism—Various topics
   - Philosophy of law: sexual harassment, abortion, date rape, consent theory
   - Work of particular philosophers: Hobbes, Rousseau, Mill, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, David Gauthier, Charles Taylor, Wilfrid Sellars, and others not regularly taught by the department
B. Research specialties:
   - Foundations of game theory, especially role of common knowledge, theories of convention and norms, theories of oppression, feminist ethics, applications of game theory and decision theory to social/political problems, abortion, rape, sexual harassment, theories of resistance, theories of social groups, methodological individualism vs. holism, theories of rationality
Meeting arrangements
A. PHIL 340 and PHIL 600 should be weekly meetings that cover the readings for most of the term. We may decide at some points, when the student is writing up the final paper for instance, not to meet for a week or so. This should be clearly agreed upon by both of us, however. And whenever you are going to have to miss a meeting be sure to let me know as far in advance as possible, even if that means calling me 10 minutes before our meeting to tell me that your car broke down!
B. PHIL 460—Usually weekly meetings until the topic is established and narrowed down, then whenever you have a portion or draft to run by me for comments.

C. PHIL 900—Weekly meetings are presumed.
D. PHIL 901—Usually weekly meetings until the topic is established and narrowed down, then whenever you have a portion or draft to run by me for comments
E. PHIL 999—Weekly meetings, perhaps for an entire term, until there is a clear sense of direction, then whenever you have a draft of the prospectus for me to comment on. After the prospectus has been approved, you may want to meet more or less frequently, but at least whenever you have a draft of a chapter to show me.

Readings and assignments
A. PHIL 340, PHIL 600, PHIL 900
   - Syllabus: You will select the reading with more or less assistance from me, though I will maintain veto power over any reading that you will want to discuss with me (expect me to read).
   - Annotated Bibliography: At the end of the term you will prepare a list of the readings we have done with a brief annotation concerning the topic and points of interest of the reading.
   - Paper: Normally you will be expected to write a term paper on a subject of interest to you from the readings we have done. We can also consider other final products, however.

B. PHIL 460, PHIL 901
   - Paper: The final product for each of these is set by departmental practice.
   - Bibliography: You will select all references and we will discuss some of them together. I will provide suggestions, but the final choices are yours to make.
   - Exam: Each of these requires an oral exam by three members of the department, including myself as director.

C. PHIL 899, PHIL 999 (see Department Guidelines for Graduate Students for specifics)
   - Thesis: The final product for each of these is set by department practice.
   - Bibliography: You will select all references and we will discuss some of them together. I will provide suggestions, but the final choices are yours to make.
   - Exam: Each of these requires an oral exam. The M.A. oral exam is by three members of the department, including myself as director. The Ph.D. oral exam is by four members of the Philosophy department, including myself as director, and one member of the KU Graduate Faculty from a department other than Philosophy.

Grades
A. PHIL 340, 600, 900, 901: I will assign A, B, C, D, F as merited. In exceptional cases I may consider giving the student an ‘I’ for a specific, short period of time.
B. PHIL 899, 999: I will assign P/F for every semester until the last one, then A, B or C as merited.
Dissertation Student Information

Student Name _______________________________

Advisor:

Ph.D. Comps Oral Exam

Date taken:

Result:

Committee:

Dissertation Topic:

Date begun:

Prospective Dissertation Committee:

Prospectus Title:

Date distributed to Dissertation Committee:

Committee:

Date Distributed to Dept.:

Approved by Committee:

Dissertation:

Chapters:

Comments on chapters (list chapter # and title, date received, date returned):
Date Sent to Committee for Approval:

Outside member of Committee:

Defense scheduled:

Defense date:                                                  Result:

Job Search:

Type of job desired:

Universities/colleges applied to:                          Date:

Interviews:
STUDENT CONSENT FORM—SHARING COURSE WORK

I will randomly select several students whose work will be copied and included in an archive of student work that I keep for this course. That archive is important to my continued reflection on how well students are learning in my courses. There are also two additional ways that I sometimes use a small portion of the archive of student work. First, I often use prior students’ work as a point of comment for later students who are preparing for examinations. I post various questions and answers on a Web site and invite students to comment on how well the answers address the questions. Second, I maintain a course portfolio in which I write about the quality of student performance that is generated in the course. These examples are a very important piece of my work that I show to other professors to indicate how much and how deeply students are learning. Once the course portfolio is completed, it will also be made available to a wider audience of professors on a public Web site on teaching and learning in higher education (http://www.cte.ku.edu/gallery/).

This form requests your consent to have your work possibly included in discussions of understanding for future students and in any versions of my writing about teaching in a portfolio. There is only a small chance your work would be randomly included in my private archive for any assignment, but I ask all students for their permission should that be the case. Note that you have the choice to have your work be anonymous or have your name be part of the work.

Please check the following designated purposes (if any) to which you give your consent:

_____ I am willing to have copies of my coursework available so later students can use it for preparation.

_____ I am willing to have copies of my coursework included in my professor’s course portfolio.

_____ I am willing to have copies of my coursework included in the public Web site.

Please check one of the following:

_____ I wish to have my name remain on any work that is used.

_____ I wish to have my name removed on any work that is used.

Additional restrictions on the use of my texts (please specify):

Print name__________________________________________ Date______________________________

Phone number (          )________________________________ Email____________________________

Course title__________________________________________ Professor_________________________

By signing below you give your permission that work you produce for this course may be used with the restrictions and for the purposes you indicated above. You understand that your grade is NOT connected in any way to your participation in this project, and I will not receive the list of students who have given permission to have their work shared until after I have turned in the grades for the course. Your anonymity will be maintained unless you designate otherwise. Finally, you understand that you are free to withdraw consent at any time, now or in the future, without being penalized.

Signature__________________________________________

Please address questions to: (name of faculty member, department, phone number, email.)
APPENDIX B

TEACHING-RELATED WORKSHEETS FOR PROMOTION & TENURE
As you prepare to represent your teaching for professional review, each offering of a course is an occasion for learning and development. Consider using these prompts at the end of each semester to remember what you thought about a course and what you learned about teaching it. The accumulation of several of these sheets for a course will provide an excellent core of a narrative on teaching that could be reviewed by a colleague. The archive of student examples (and the distribution of grades for each) will provide a rich picture of your accomplishments.

1. Of all the material you taught, what were the three or four most important goals you had for student understanding and performance?

2. Where in the students’ work for the semester did they have the best opportunity to show you their understanding and their skills? Be sure to retain copies of a small representative sample of that work (two As, two Bs, two Cs of each).

3. What made you most pleased about students’ work on those central intellectual topics? What features of their work indicated real success in students’ performance? How broad was that success? Did it reach beyond a few top students?

4. What class activities, lectures, assignments or materials worked extremely well this semester? Can you replicate them, continue them, or expand them in useful ways? Do you have an idea about why they worked well or how you made them successful?

5. What left you most disappointed about students’ work on those central intellectual topics? What features of their work would you hope to see improve the next time you teach the class? How many students succeeded in this challenging area? Are these goals worth keeping or should you put your energy elsewhere?

6. What class activities, lectures, assignments or materials did not go well this semester? How might you replace them or modify them to achieve your goals better? Are there new ways you could achieve the same goals?

7. What ideas have you had for something new you want to add to this course the next time you teach it? Will the topics or goals evolve in some way? Are there particular forms of measuring learning you want to add? Are there additional ways of engaging students you want to try?

8. Overall, what have you learned about teaching in general from this course? Are there lessons you would carry forward to teaching any class at this general level and size? What ideas, reactions or feelings do you have about teaching right now, about this course or in general?
PREPARING FOR REVIEW

TEACHING NARRATIVE

Your Teaching Narrative is a one-page statement that provides a brief overview of your teaching. To help you develop it, answer the following questions:

What topics do you teach?

What are one or two examples of intellectual goals you have for students?

How do you help students achieve course goals?

How do you know that students are achieving these goals?

How have your teaching experiences shaped your ongoing goals and practices as a teacher?
When I initially developed my Cognitive Development (PSYC 430) course at KU 12 years ago, I found myself facing a challenge that is familiar to many new faculty: how to teach students at diverse skills levels without lowering the bar. My goals for student learning were much the same as they are now: to understand and critically evaluate research on cognitive development, synthesize and connect across multiple empirical findings in the field, apply research findings and major course themes to real world situations, and develop clear and cohesive written arguments. I developed a capstone assignment for the course that integrated a number of these skills that I want students to take away from the course: to write a paper framed as an advice column, providing practical recommendations to parents, based on their critical reading of empirical articles from the psychological literature. But in my earliest offerings of the course, I found that students seemed to lack the skills required for this assignment, and their performance did not reflect the type of scholarly work that I expected at their level. Because the writing task is “real-world,” student interest in the assignment was high. The challenge I faced was how to help students read, understand, and use psychological research. Thus, across several offerings of the course, I made several changes to the term project assignment to better support students’ attainment of the necessary skills.

My earliest modifications involved simplifying the project, breaking it into multiple subcomponents to be completed throughout the semester, providing support and feedback at each step. For instance, I invited a librarian to conduct an in-class tour of the psychological literature search database, and required students to turn in their articles for feedback on appropriateness. I also incorporated an in-class, guided analysis of an empirical article. Finally, I developed a detailed grading rubric for the paper and distributed it to students before they wrote their papers. I observed clear upgrades in student work during this period; most students selected appropriate sources, and produced solid summaries and analyses of their empirical articles. Yet 15-20% of the students still needed individual assistance to find appropriate and relevant articles. Moreover, students seemed to devote almost all of their efforts to the summaries of individual articles, and had difficulty integrating the research findings and writing coherent arguments about the applications. I targeted these skills in several additional course enhancements by partnering with the KU Libraries and Writing Center (Spring 2007 to present). For instance, Erin Ellis from the KU Libraries provided hands-on literature search instruction in a computer lab, and students wrote summaries of their articles early in the process to free up their resources for the difficult task of article synthesis. They then participated in a Peer Workshop in which they reviewed each others’ summaries and discussed and debated the implications of the research. We also encouraged students to consult with staff from the Libraries and Writing Center throughout the semester. At the same time, I increased the number of articles students were required to synthesize.

There are several indications that the latest course modifications were successful. Not one student required individual assistance locating and selecting his or her empirical resources this past semester, and no one submitted articles from inappropriate sources (e.g., popular media). Furthermore, I was very impressed with the insightful and constructive feedback students gave each other during the peer review process. Overall grades on the term project have changed very little from year to year, in part because my expectations for what constitutes “outstanding” or “adequate” work have increased with the level of support I am providing to students. But comparisons of actual student products from year to year show that on the whole the papers were clearer and more sophisticated...
During the most recent offering than they were during previous semesters. In particular, I observed a much improved ability to synthesize diverse research findings and draw appropriate conclusions, and this change is especially noteworthy given that students were required to synthesize more research findings during the most recent offerings. Formal and informal student evaluations of the course were also quite positive- most liked being held accountable for assignment stages across the semester, and they believed that it improved their final products. I am very happy with students’ improved information literacy skills and the increased level of synthesis after the most recent course modifications and instructional partnership. Student work is more closely approximating the types of upper-level work that I think should be exhibited. Therefore, this is an approach that I will continue to use.

Sample Narrative Description of Student Learning Data: PSYC 430, Andrea Greenhoot

For many years I have used a capstone assignment in my undergraduate course on Cognitive Development (PSYC 430) that integrates many of the skills I want students to take away from the course. The assignment asks students to write a mock advice column, providing practical recommendations to parents based on their critical reading of empirical articles from the psychological literature. One dimension of the assignment that has been particularly difficult for students is the synthesis of multiple research findings, especially when those findings lead to divergent conclusions. This weakness clearly stands out in Panel A of Figure 1, which summarizes the percent of students in the Fall semester of 2005 who received high, intermediate, and low scores on four major dimensions of the assignment. In the Spring of 2007, I partnered with colleagues from the KU Libraries and Writing Center to redesign the course to better support students’ attainment of the skills required for this assignment, with particular emphasis on improving their synthesis skills. The first set of changes involved breaking the assignment into more stages and providing increased support and feedback at each step. These changes yielded small upgrades in students’ use of research, synthesis of research, and application to real world conclusions (see panel B). To promote further improvement in synthesis in later semesters, we added several learning activities (e.g., students evaluated and discussed sample papers with the rubric) that specifically targeted this skill area (Fall 2009), and then required students to write a traditional literature review paper before producing the advice column (Fall 2010). After making these changes, I saw particularly strong increases in students’ abilities to synthesize multiple findings and apply them in real world conclusions. The shift in synthesis scores is especially noteworthy because at the same time that I increased support and feedback to the students, I also increased the number of articles students were required to synthesize. Thus, my students are performing better on an even more sophisticated learning task. Nonetheless, there may still be room for improvement, the changes I made to support synthesis may have also led to the small drop in high-level performance on the “use of research” category. In the next offering, we will work with students on how to maintain a clear research emphasis while writing for the “real world.”
PREPARING FOR REVIEW

FOUR FACETS OF TEACHING FOR PEER REVIEWERS

Under the Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure Recommendations, KU faculty members who are completing peer reviews are encouraged to address the following four areas:

Quality of intellectual content
- Is the material in this course appropriate for the topic, appropriate for the curriculum and institution?
- Is the content related to current issues and developments in the field?
- Is there intellectual coherence to the course content?
- Are the intellectual goals for students well articulated and congruent with the course content and mission?

Quality of teaching practices
- Is the contact time with students well organized and planned, and if so, are the plans carried out?
- How much of the time are students actively engaged in the material?
- Are there opportunities (in or out of class) for students to practice the skills embedded in course goals?
- Are there particularly creative or effective uses of contact time that could improve student understanding?
- Are there any course structures or procedures that contribute especially to the likely achievement of understanding by students?

Quality of student understanding
- Is the performance asked of students appropriate for course goals, level of course, and for the institution?
- Does the performance requested include challenging levels of conceptual understanding and critical evaluation of the material appropriate to the level of the course and of the students?
- Are students being asked to demonstrate competence in the stated course goals? If not, is it possible to identify why?
- Are there obvious changes in the course that could improve performance?
- Are the forms of evaluation and assessment appropriate to the stated goals of the course?
- Are they particularly creative or do they provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding using intellectual skills typical of the field?
- Is the weighting of course assignments in grade calculation coordinated with the relative importance of the course goals?

Summarizing the evidence of reflective consideration and development
- Has the faculty member made a sincere effort to insure that students achieve the course goals?
- Has the faculty member identified any meaningful relationship between what (s)he teaches and how students perform?
- Is there evidence the faculty member has changed teaching practices based on past teaching experiences?
- Is there evidence of insightful analysis of teaching practice that resulted from consideration of student performance?

As reported in the November 2005 issue of Teaching Matters, published by the KU Center for Teaching Excellence.
GUIDELINES FOR PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The University Task Force Report on the Assessment of Teaching and Learning has constructed these guidelines to assist departments in conducting peer reviews of teaching. The guidelines are intended to orient faculty members to new expectations for peer reviews of teaching and to help expedite the review process.

Q: What should a peer review reflect?

Peer review of teaching should reflect multiple sources of information, including course materials and student work as well as observations of contact time with students. Reviews of materials and in-class practices should include a variety of class sizes and instructional levels (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, survey, upper division course, etc.) as appropriate to the faculty member’s instructional responsibilities. The resulting evaluations should address both strengths and areas to target for improvement.

Q: Who should conduct peer reviews of teaching?

Peer reviews of teaching are most effective when they are conducted by more than one individual over multiple periods. Because best teaching practices differ across disciplines, it is strongly recommended that peer reviews are conducted by faculty members from the same department, preferably by different reviewers each year. Peer reviewers need not be at an equivalent or higher rank to the person being reviewed. At the request of a faculty member, a reviewer external to the department or the University could be solicited to provide a reference on the quality of the content, instructional design, or student work evident in the faculty member’s course or teaching portfolio.

Q: How often should we conduct peer reviews of teaching?

There are no definitive rules regarding how often peer reviews are conducted, other than prior to third-year reviews and tenure decisions for tenure-track faculty and prior to decisions for associate professors being considered for promotion to full professor. Peer review in any given year may focus on class materials, class observations, or other documentation. The review prior to the third-year review, the pre-tenure review, and review for promotion to full professor should consider the entire portfolio.

Q: What materials should be provided by the faculty member under review?

1. Teaching materials to demonstrate the intellectual content of teaching:
   - Syllabi, preferably annotated to highlight decisions made in including material and choosing aspects of the field to include, exclude, or emphasize in the course.
   - Selected course materials (readings, demonstrations, grading standards/rubrics).
   - Evidence of innovative techniques or materials used in teaching.
   - Student voice and evidence of student learning:
     - Midterm and end-of-the-semester student feedback forms, both quantitative and optional qualitative comments.
     - Samples of assignments students use to demonstrate their understanding of key course goals. For each assignment chosen for review, reviewees should provide two A papers.
(or equivalent category of judgment), two B papers, and two C papers, along with the distribution of performance for the entire class.

2. Teaching narrative:
   - This is a short statement (one to two pages) that is the faculty member’s own account of how his or her teaching has developed over time. The teacher should pay particular attention to articulating how he or she defines course goals and assesses student learning. The statement should also include reflection on how the faculty member’s teaching experiences have shaped his or her goals and practices as a teacher.

Q: What are the responsibilities of peer reviewers?

1. Interaction: After reviewing the materials provided by the reviewee, the peer reviewer and the reviewee should engage in a conversation about the faculty member’s teaching practices. The four-point, KU guideline to peer reviews of teaching can serve as a useful framework for this conversation (see page 84).

2. Documentation: The peer reviewer prepares comments regarding the faculty member’s teaching practices, including preparation for courses, conduct in and outside of class, and methods of assessing teaching effectiveness and student learning. The recommended organization of these comments would reflect the four key facets of teaching described in KU’s guideline to peer reviews of teaching: quality of intellectual content, quality of teaching practices, quality of student understanding, and evidence of reflective consideration and development.

3. Classroom observations: The peer reviewer may find it useful to visit the faculty member’s class to see how ideas and objectives are put into practice, how the faculty member engages with students, and how students respond and engage with the instructor and with class material. Peer reviewers may also observe contact time with students outside of the classroom. Please note that, contrary to prior norms, these observations should NOT be the sole or even primary focus of peer evaluations.

Q: Where can I find additional resources on teaching and peer evaluations?

1. Task Force Report on the Assessment of Teaching and Learning (http://www2.ku.edu/~unigov/TFATL08FR.shtml)
2. University of Kansas Documents for Promotion and Tenure (facultydevelopment.ku.edu/promotion-tenure)
3. Samples of Documentation:
   a. Peer review letters (http://www.cte.ku.edu/documenting/observations/samples.shtml)
   b. Teaching Reflection Statements (http://www.cte.ku.edu/documenting/statements/)
   c. Course Portfolios (http://www.cte.ku.edu/gallery/)
Below is the standard survey students may be given at the end of each semester's course. Check with your department to see which form it uses.

**STUDENT SURVEY OF TEACHING: THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS**

Student evaluations of teaching play an important role in enhancing the quality of instruction at the University of Kansas. The evaluations are made available to the faculty member (after grades are turned in) and to the chairperson/Dean of the School. These evaluations are considered in the processes for merit salary, promotion and tenure, and sabbatical leave decisions. Please give your responses careful attention.

### Instructions
- Use a No. 2 pencil only. No erasing, blackening or felt tip pens.
- Please answer each question as honestly as you wish to or are able.
- All the class number accurately and completely.

### Questions

**1.** This instructor provided content and materials that were useful and organized.

**2.** This instructor set and met clear goals and objectives for the course.

**3.** This instructor expected of me was well defined and fair.

**4.** The instructor's teaching was clear, understandable, and engaging.

**5.** The instructor was encouraging, supportive, and involved in my learning the course material.

**6.** This instructor was available, responsive, and helpful.

**7.** This instructor demonstrated respect for students and their points of view.

**8.** Compared with courses at a similar level, I would rate how much I learned as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less</th>
<th>the same</th>
<th>More</th>
<th>Much more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Responses

**How important were the following reasons for taking this course?**

1. Course fulfills a requirement.
2. Course was not (a) open.
3. Course was at a convenient time.
4. Course topic interests me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### My student status is:

1. Undergraduate
2. Graduate
3. Other ( Specify degree, family member)

**What year of study are you in?**

1. 1st
2. 2nd
3. 3rd
4. 4th
5. 5th
6. 6th or more

**Over the course of the semester, how many class meetings did you miss?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missed Meetings</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What grade do you expect in this class?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preparing for Review
PREPARING FOR REVIEW

This report shows how the results of the student survey of teaching are recorded.

Student Survey of Teaching: University of Kansas
Spring 2007

Class results: □ mean and 95% C.I.
Department results for courses in the 100-299 range • mean and 95% C.I.

Teaching was clear, understandable and engaging
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=4.58 Std Dev=0.61

Encouraging, supportive, and involved in learning
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=4.26 Std Dev=0.53

Available, responsive, and helpful
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=4.42 Std Dev=0.77

Content and materials were useful and organized
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=4.56 Std Dev=0.61

Set and met clear goals and objectives
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=4.56 Std Dev=0.51

Expectations were well defined and fair
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=4.63 Std Dev=0.63

Expectations were appropriately challenging
Mean=4.42 Std Dev=0.77

Respected students and their points of view
Class distribution: n=16
Mean=4.39 Std Dev=0.62

Amount learned compared to courses at similar level
Class distribution: n=19
Mean=3.56 Std Dev=0.95

Course: PSYC 104 / Class #: 58859
Instructor: Jayhawk, lam
PREPARING FOR REVIEW
This report shows how a faculty member might graph a trajectory of teaching progress in one or more courses over a period of time.
**PREPARING FOR REVIEW**

**OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**

Recommendation 3: Faculty members should collect open-ended student comments to guide improvement of teaching. Reporting these comments should remain optional, and if they are used in evaluations they should be reported systematically.

Many faculty members agree that a great deal can be learned from the observations offered by students in response to questions inviting commentary on features of instruction, and faculty members should be encouraged to seek open-ended commentary. It is especially valuable for faculty members to invite these comments during the semester at a time when they can still respond to the comments with adjustments in the course. Those adjustments are valuable to students, and faculty members can also include those changes as part of their teaching record.

We recommend continuing the policy jointly articulated by the Provost and by Faculty Governance that makes the use of such comments in personnel decisions optional, at the discretion of the faculty member or unit. Accordingly, any open-ended questions used by a faculty member or requested by an individual department should be on a separate sheet from the numerical rating items, so that they may be collected and distributed independently of each other. Open-ended questions should be framed in ways that maximize the likelihood of constructive comments and specifically discourage irrelevant or disparaging comments about faculty members.

As a general rule, we recommend that these comments be used for the benefit of teachers working to improve their instruction. There may be times in the evaluation of an instructor when it would be useful to have such comments for the interpretation of ambiguous numerical information. In such cases, the faculty member should bring forward the entire sample of such comments to aid in interpretation. Additionally, an individual faculty member should always be free to bring the comments forward, as long as they are reported in a professional manner (see below).

Within KU there are distinct communities of evidence, in which knowledge is constructed in different ways and conclusions are evaluated based on varying criteria. For many in the humanities, as well as from other areas of campus, there is great value in close reading of text, done by an individual, using a combination of personal experience and professional conventions of reading. For people in the social and natural sciences, and many in professional areas, open-ended verbal statements are data like any other, and the protocols and conventions of data analysis would be the preferred method of reading. The practices around using open-ended student comments should be flexible enough that different local communities (such as departments) can adopt consensual practices that reflect their shared understanding of reading and evidence. This is especially true for the use of these comments as guides for continuous development of teaching.

When samples of comments are used in formal evaluation, the resulting judgment represents an estimate of the professional quality of a faculty member’s teaching. In that context, people presume that the conclusions drawn are an accurate representation of the teaching in question and not an artifact of either the reading or the gathering of comments. For that reason, we recommend that professional standards of treating comments as data be followed whenever comments are included in an evaluative professional context beyond a department level. This practice would assure all faculty members that the information will inform the process in the fairest way possible.
The Task Force consulted with KU faculty members whose research includes the analysis of the content of comments. That group noted a series of careful, empirically justified steps that are required for such evidence to meet professional standards of validity. It would be impossible as a practical matter for review of teaching comments to meet the publication standards of the research community, but several general guidelines emerged from the conversation that we recommend be included in the handling of all open-ended comments.

- The sample of comments should be as large as possible; small samples can be very misleading.
- Analysis should always include a record of non-responders. Summary descriptions place the responses in a context of the total possible population.
- The analysis begins with the framing of a specific question or questions to be answered by the comments.
- Analysis includes identification of categories of responses, as appropriate to the question being answered. Where possible these categories should be distinct from each other and include a full range of possible answers.
- Individual comments should be put into a single category when possible; if a comment is long or complex, it can be broken into components and counted as separate comments.
- The final product would report a frequency of comments in each category, always including the number of people who did not respond to the question.

The analysis produced will be only as good as the questions asked and the categories of responses that are identified. If those are well constructed and aligned with each other, the analysis can help answer the question posed.
APPENDIX C

DOCUMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY REVIEW
UNIVERSITY REVIEWS

COURSES TAUGHT

To complete this part of your review, you need to record the following information about every course you have taught:

- Course number and title
- Course code (required for major, survey course, clinical/supervision, service course, elective, instructional television, and/or team taught)
- Semester and year taught
- Number of students enrolled
- All original student rating sheets and summary forms for your courses. Under Regent’s and University policy, faculty members may choose to include student comments in dossiers, but they are not required to do so.

In the following table, list all courses taught.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number and Title</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Semester/Year</th>
<th># Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

Course codes:
R = required for major   Svy = survey course   E = elective   T = team taught
Ser = service course     C = clinical/supervision ITV = instructional television
INTRODUCTION

High quality teaching and scholarship have long been recognized as the two hallmarks of a productive faculty member. Teaching is serious intellectual work that is grounded in deep knowledge and understanding of a field, and it includes the ability to convey that understanding in clear and engaging ways. The conduct of courses is the central feature of our teaching responsibilities at KU, and it has priority among the many kinds of teaching activities that take place. Our identification of teaching should not be limited to formal class performance, however, and a broader menu of teaching activities provides additional ways to demonstrate quality in teaching.

There is more to quality instruction than making one’s knowledge and understanding accessible to students; effective education successfully generates understanding, knowledge, and skills among students. People acquire more skill in teaching over time, and as in research, that success comes from thinking about the results of prior efforts and identifying ways to improve future results. Quality in teaching will include self-evaluation of how well students are learning and inquiry into how to improve learning in each class.

The measurement of any human activity is never perfect, whether it is teaching or research. The proposed guidelines offer a framework from which faculty can choose elements that may improve the measurement of teaching beyond current practices. It is intended to increase flexibility by offering many different ways that teachers can show their work and demonstrate what they are learning from its results.

It is not expected that any single faculty member would engage in all or even most of the activities listed below, but they should be recognized as part of teaching when they occur across the full duration of a teaching career.

ACTIVITIES

How does this teacher conduct courses?

Evaluation in this area should focus on some or all of the following factors:
- Clarity of course goals
- Relevance and appropriateness of course content
- Effectiveness of instruction in lecture, labs, discussion, studios, and other activities
- Appropriate relationship with students in which the instructor is available, challenges students, and supports their learning
- Measures of student learning
- Presentation of courses serving the mission of the unit or University

A faculty member could provide various forms of evidence to indicate success in achieving these aims, such as:
- Annotated syllabus
- Selection of course materials (readings, resources, demonstrations, grading standards, etc.)
- Ratings and/or written comments from students
- Peer evaluation of classroom performance, interaction with students, and/or course materials
- Samples of student work demonstrating student learning
- Trend data showing the impact of the teacher on measures of learning
- List of courses taught and explanation of their importance
- Explanation of special service in particular courses, such as large lecture courses
- Teaching awards or nominations for teaching awards
- Other materials that the faculty member believes indicate excellence in teaching

Faculty colleagues and or the department chair would evaluate the evidence provided by the faculty member to judge the degree to which he/she was attaining the aims cited above. Student perspectives of those properties of teaching they are in a good position to evaluate are reflected in “Ratings and/or written comments from students” shown above.

**How does this teacher prepare for courses?**

Evaluation in this area should focus on the following factors:
- Appropriate preparation of new courses or efforts to improve instruction
- Continuing efforts to improve teaching

A faculty member could provide various forms of evidence to indicate success in achieving these aims, such as:
- Sample of course materials: learning activities, assignments, etc. for new or existing courses
- Plans for future course development; may include a journal or other reflections on teaching
- Examples of innovation in teaching including teaching practices, technology, etc.
- Seminars attended or conducted on teaching; include description of new approaches learned from workshops or description of how ideas have been incorporated into teaching (annotated syllabus or other notes)
- Student comments indicating changes in teaching, faculty observation supporting innovation based on workshops
- Examples of collaboration with faculty at KU or elsewhere to support teaching
- Examples of work with KU offices (KU Libraries, Writing Center, Learning Communities, etc.) to support teaching
- Publication(s) or other research on teaching
- Awards or nominations for research, teaching, or service related to improving teaching
- Other materials that the faculty member believes indicate excellence in teaching

Faculty colleagues and or the department chair would evaluate the evidence provided by the faculty member to judge the degree to which he/she was attaining the aims cited above.

**What teaching work has the faculty member done in addition to teaching courses?**

Evaluation in this area should focus on some or all of the following factors:
- Coordinating courses within a program, or developing a new course
- Supporting teaching at the unit level by developing new materials for general use; creating infrastructure for labs, studios, or field work; seeking grant support for teaching; recruiting students
- Mentoring and supervising GTAs/GRAs
- Mentoring and supervising students in clinical settings or internships
- Working with student groups
- Mentoring new faculty members in their role as teachers
- Mentoring students or directing research projects

A faculty member could provide various forms of evidence to indicate success in achieving these aims, such as:
- List of administrative or coordination activities, along with new materials developed and commentary from colleagues and students involved
- Observations and comments on unit level contributions by students, colleagues, chair, dean
- External funding of proposals/awards related to teaching, reviews of proposals
- Lists of those mentored and supervised in various roles (undergraduate, graduate, post-docs; research, teaching, clinical work)
- Unit records of GTAs/GRAs’ performance, comments from other students learning from graduate students, comments from community partners or clients
- Examples of student work completed under teacher’s supervision, along with descriptions of venues for presentation and any recognition
- Letters from students reflecting on mentoring activities and effectiveness and indicating how the mentoring has influenced student work and success
- Faculty colleagues’ comments on mentoring activities, e.g., service on MA or MS/PhD committees
- Examples of any regional or national critical review or recognition of student work
- Time to degree, success in obtaining employment or other placement
- Lists of student groups supported, identifying unit or university level, along with student comments, awards or achievement by the group
- Lists of faculty colleagues mentored on teaching, with examples of feedback given or comments from colleagues about the impact of the shared work

Faculty colleagues and/or the department chair would evaluate the evidence provided by the faculty member to judge the degree to which he/she was attaining the aims cited above.

**Has this faculty member made contributions related to scholarship of teaching?**

Evaluation in this area should focus on some or all of the following factors:
- Teaching related presentations at KU or elsewhere
- Attending or organizing teaching institutes
- Serving as a guest teacher at other institutions, for outside associations, or in the community
- Developing course materials, such as textbooks or websites
- Applying for and receiving grants in support of teaching or publishing articles related to teaching
- Participating in outreach to local schools (K-12) or other forums

A faculty member could provide various forms of evidence to indicate success in achieving these aims, such as:
- Conference programs from presentations, letters, or other evaluations of quality of presentations; samples of presentation notes or published proceedings; programs from institutes or letters evaluating participation or impact
- List of service on department or University teaching committees or presentations at KU Summit or the Center for Teaching Excellence
- Letters attesting to impact of guest presentations in classes; formal evaluations if available
- Books, web addresses, or other materials generated, along with any letters attesting to the impact or quality of the materials
- Products developed for schools, feedback from organizers of presentations, statements from professional society or honors or awards for contributions
- Grant proposals, reviewer feedback on proposals, copies of articles submitted and published

Faculty colleagues and/or the department chair would evaluate the evidence provided by the faculty member to judge the degree to which he/she was attaining the aims cited above.
GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENT IMPLEMENTATION

High quality teaching and scholarship have long been recognized as the hallmarks of a productive faculty member. Teaching is complex intellectual work that is grounded in deep knowledge and understanding of a field, and it includes the ability to convey that understanding in clear and engaging ways. The conduct of courses is the central feature of our teaching responsibilities at KU. Our identification of teaching should not be limited to formal class performance, however, and a broader menu of teaching activities provides additional ways to demonstrate quality in teaching.

These proposed guidelines offer a framework from which faculty members can choose elements appropriate for their department, their discipline, the stage of their career, and the type of review. It is intended to increase flexibility by offering many different ways that teachers can show their work and demonstrate what they are learning from its results.

It is not expected that any individual faculty member would engage in all or even most of the activities outlined below, but they should be recognized as part of teaching when they occur across the full duration of a teaching career.

How should departments evaluate teaching?
The record of teaching should begin with a collection of materials provided by the faculty member, addressing these questions:
- How does this teacher conduct courses?
- How does this teacher prepare for courses?
- What teaching work has the faculty member done in addition to teaching courses?
- Has the faculty member made progress over time in development of teaching and/or shared teaching work with colleagues?

The previous document, Activities That May Be Considered in the Evaluation of Teaching at KU, includes factors for evaluating each question and examples of various forms of evidence for answering each question.

It would be helpful for members of an individual unit to discuss which of these areas would be most important for that unit’s mission, so that faculty members would know the kinds of contributions that are most valued by their department colleagues.

In addition to collecting materials, the faculty member should assess her/his progress in generating effective instruction. The faculty member may highlight specific goals in teaching and comment on how the materials collected demonstrate the degree to which they have been achieved.

What about student ratings?
Students’ perceptions of teaching can identify key features of the conduct of courses, and the items used should focus on characteristics of teaching that students clearly can recognize. Students can tell accurately whether faculty members are accessible, respectful, available, clear, and timely.

Whether the unit uses the new student evaluation of teaching form or its own, it is important to recognize that no single number from students is an adequate substitute for professional judgment. Students provide a valuable perspective that can be used to inform or confirm or possibly challenge the perspective of the faculty member or peers. Ratings should be taken seriously as complemen-
tary indicators of key components in the conduct of classes, but they should not be a substitute for
direct peer evaluation of the quality or success of instruction.

Open-ended student comments are most valuable as guides to instructors for their own improve-
ment. It is University policy, however, that the use of these comments in evaluation is optional.
Accordingly, they should be collected on separate pieces of paper (or online) so they can be treated
independently of the required numerical ratings. When open-ended comments are used in a per-
sonnel file, they should be treated in a professional way, as described by the Task Force.

**How can departments sustain the process?**
A department plan should include decisions about how often each part of the process would be
used. Student feedback and faculty-generated updates on innovations, development, or public
presentation of teaching could easily be part of annual review, but more labor intensive processes
could be intermittent at different stages of a career. For example, it is reasonable for pre-tenure fac-
culty members to reflect annually on how effective their teaching is and on how and why their teach-
ing practices are evolving. Between promotion to associate and promotion to full professor, that
might be useful every two or three years, and perhaps for full professors or other very experienced
teachers, reflection would be most useful every three to five years. Similarly, there is real benefit to
having peers look closely at course materials and student learning of pre-tenure faculty members,
but a more intermittent schedule of deep review would be implemented after tenure. To sustain a
rich peer review of teaching, each unit will need to think through how it can allocate faculty re-
sources wisely.
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION—MULTIPLE SOURCES

To document your teaching, you’ll need to use multiple sources of information and blend them into a teaching portfolio. In addition to student evaluations and comments, documentation may include any of the following:

- Course syllabi
- Sample assignments that demonstrate innovations
- Student work on assignments, exams or projects
- Peer evaluations
- Description of how you’ve improved your teaching through reflective journals or course design changes that enhanced student learning
- Descriptions of how your publications or research activities relate to teaching
- List of grants related to personnel preparation

You can conveniently store many of these items using an electronic portfolio program called the KEEP Toolkit. To set up an account, check the KEEP Toolkit site at http://portfolio.ku.edu; you can login with your Exchange account information.

SUMMARY OF WEB RESOURCES RELATED TO THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING

The following links to the Center for Teaching Excellence web site will provide additional information regarding the evaluation of teaching. They are found in the “Documenting Teaching” section of the site:

- Teaching statements: http://www.cte.ku.edu/documenting/statements
- Developing peer observations: http://www.cte.ku.edu/documenting/observations
- Creating teaching portfolios: http://www.cte.ku.edu/documenting/portfolios
- Student survey of teaching: http://www.cte.ku.edu/documenting/survey
APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF RUBRICS
RUBRICS

SAMPLE WRITING ASSIGNMENT AND CORRESPONDING RUBRIC

PSYC 333: Child Psychology
Andrea Greenhoot

The ultimate goal of Assignment 2 is to evaluate the accuracy of information provided in a website about parenting issues using psychological research. You are to write a letter to a hypothetical friend who has been relying on the website for parenting advice, telling him or her whether or not to believe the information provided on the site. Justify your comments about the accuracy of the site by describing the research presented in your selected article. You should feel free to be creative in your approach to this assignment, but it is critical that you discuss the accuracy of some of the information provided on the site (you do not have to evaluate every piece of information on the site) and that you use the research presented in your article to explain your position. Specifically, your “letter” should:

- Make the “problem” clear. In other words, introduce the issue at hand (the issue for which the friend is seeking parenting advice) and the information provided on the website.
- Describe the relevant research (your article). Discuss whether you think the advice presented in the website should be followed, using the research presented in your article as support for your comments. Thus, your letter should include the kind of the information you were asked to provide about your article in assignment 2b. Be sure to mention reasons why this study is persuasive (e.g., it controlled for lots of possible confounds), or whether there are any important caveats (e.g., even though this study showed this… there are limitations to their method that we should keep in mind…).
- Apply the research to the problem. Discuss the implications of this research for the particular real-world parenting issue that is the focus of the website, and based on this research application offer some advice to your friend. Note that it is ok to conclude that experts disagree, or that more research needs to be done, if you have good reasons to make that argument and you make those reasons clear (e.g., if there are conflicting findings or if you have good reasons to question the conclusions of the study you reviewed).

Your letter should be approximately two pages typed and double-spaced. In addition, be sure to include:
- Your name, ID, and color group
- Your topic
- The reference for your article (this should indicate the authors’ names, year of publication, name of article, name of journal, journal volume number and page numbers)
### Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Clarity and Organization</th>
<th>Description of Research</th>
<th>Application of Research</th>
<th>Writing Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus of “Letter” is clear at outset; Message is communicated clearly; Well-organized and persuasive</td>
<td>Accurate, clear, and appropriate level of detail</td>
<td>Accurate and insightful application to material presented in website</td>
<td>Well-written. Grammatical errors and errors in sentence structure (fragments, run-ons) are minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 point</strong></td>
<td><strong>6 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>6 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 point</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message is reasonably clear, but some difficulty following arguments</td>
<td>Partly inaccurate, incomplete or unclear</td>
<td>Some inaccuracy in application to site; or does not offer much insight</td>
<td>A few grammatical errors or errors in sentence structure, or repetitious sentence structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>0 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message is not communicated clearly</td>
<td>Inaccurate, very limited or missing</td>
<td>Substantial inaccuracy, very limited or missing</td>
<td>Frequent grammatical or sentence structure errors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of Rubrics 111
You return after class one day to find a message in your voice mail from your cousin’s husband, who is obviously upset. He has called to tell you that your cousin Karen has just given birth more than two months early to a little boy who weighs slightly less than four pounds. Karen’s pregnancy had been planned and completely normal and she had followed her doctor’s advice to the letter, so this outcome comes as a complete shock. The baby has been moved to the neonatal intensive care unit. You’re very close to Karen and know that she will want to see you as soon as possible. When you visit her in the hospital, Karen tells you that the baby is in stable condition but that she’s deeply worried about what the future holds for him and for the family. She shares her fear that he will never have a normal life. From what you’ve learned in your child development class, what can you honestly tell Karen about her new son’s chances for normal development? If she asks for your advice, what would you tell her?

The grading rubric for this assignment is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Dimension</th>
<th>Clarity and Organization</th>
<th>Writing Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>15 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response indicates comprehension of assignment and course material; Insightful application</td>
<td>Message is communicated clearly; Well-organized and persuasive</td>
<td>Well-written. Grammatical errors and errors in sentence structure (fragments, run-ons) are minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 point</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response indicates some inaccuracy in applying course material or does not offer much insight into major issues</td>
<td>Message is reasonably clear, but some difficulty following arguments</td>
<td>A few grammatical errors or errors in sentence structure, or repetitious sentence structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10 points</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 point</strong></td>
<td><strong>0 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response indicates substantial inaccuracy in applying course material or is incomplete</td>
<td>Message is not communicated clearly</td>
<td>Frequent grammatical or sentence structure errors</td>
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</table>
## RUBRIC FOR FILM PRESENTATION

Instructor circles the applicable portion of the description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Presentation Skills 20%</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The presenter spoke clearly and intelligibly, modulating voice tone and quality, maintaining eye contact, and using appropriate body language. The use of humor and competent handling of technology also contributed to the excellence of the presentation. The presenter used all the time available but did not go over the time limit.</td>
<td>The presenter was intelligible but mumbled or droned, spoke too fast or too slow, whispered or shouted, used inappropriate body language, or failed to maintain eye contact, inappropriate, excessive, or too little humor or technical problems detracted from the presentation. The presentation ran over or under the time limit but not dramatically.</td>
<td>The presenter mumbled or droned, spoke too fast or too slow, whispered or shouted, used inappropriate body language, or failed to maintain eye contact to the point where intelligibility was compromised. Too much or too little humor or technological problems seriously detracted from the presentation. The presentation ran seriously over or under the time limit.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

| Group Presentation Skills 20% | The presentations followed a logical progression and allowed each member an equal opportunity to shine. Group members treated each other with courtesy and respect and assisted each other as needed. | The presentations followed a logical progression but were unbalanced in the way time or content was assigned to members, or the division of labor was fair but impeded the logical progression of the argument. Group members were mostly respectful and helpful toward one another, but there were lapses. | The presentations followed no logical progression, seriously overlapped one another or allowed one or a few people to dominate. Group members showed little respect or courtesy toward one another and did not assist one another even when it was clear that a group member was in trouble. |

| Group Organization 20% | The group thesis, topics to be covered and the direction of the individual presentations were clearly stated at the beginning and carried through in the rest of the presentation. | The thesis, topics to be covered, and the direction of the individual presentations were clearly stated at the beginning but not carried through in the rest of the presentation, or the thesis, topics to be covered, and direction emerge in the presentation but were not clearly stated in the introduction. | The thesis, topics and direction were unclear, unstated or not evident in the body of the presentation. |

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
<td>The individual presentation was well organized in itself with an introduction, body and conclusion. That organization was emphasized and made clear to the audience through the use of appropriately captioned PowerPoints, overheads or handouts.</td>
<td>The individual presentation was mostly well organized but there were problems with the introduction, body or conclusion. The presenter used PowerPoints, or handouts, but these were too wordy or too vague to help the audience follow the organization.</td>
<td>The presentation rambled with little evidence or an introduction, body or conclusion. PowerPoints, overheads or handouts were either not used or did not assist the audience in following the organization in any significant way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
<td>Facts and examples were detailed, accurate, and appropriate. Theories referenced were accurately described and appropriately used. Analyses, discussions, and conclusions were explicitly linked to examples, facts, and theories.</td>
<td>Facts and examples were mostly detailed, accurate and appropriate, but there were lapses. Theories were referenced, but they were either not accurately described or not appropriately used. The connection between analyses, discussions and conclusions was evident or implied, but not explicitly linked to examples, facts and theories.</td>
<td>Facts and examples were seriously lacking in detail, inaccurate, or inappropriate. Theories referenced were inaccurately described and inappropriately used or not referenced or used at all. There was no clear connection between analyses, discussion, and examples, facts and theories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content 20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## RUBRIC FOR CREATIVE RESPONSE PROJECT

Instructor checks each applicable box, makes comments and assigns points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Topic and Outline 3 pts.** | o Paragraph description of project turned in on time.  
o Details of project, type of project  
o Link to class topic clear |         |        |
| **Content 8 pts.**   | o Clear focus of project—what lecture, reading, movie inspired the idea  
o Grabs attention right from the beginning  
o Identifies a significant cultural difference  
o Describes values of that difference to the culture  
o Describes how you viewed previous assumptions of the culture  
o Includes brief summary of the movie, book  
o Describes clear purpose behind this choice  
o Clear connection to adding/affirming diversity |         |        |
| **Organization 5 pts.** | o Clear beginning, middle, end  
o Understandable to others, not confusing  
o Clear directions and wrap up  
o Easy to see connections to adding/affirming diversity  
o Clear link to class topics |         |        |
| **Creativity 11 pts.** | o Puts together a presentation that is “out of your comfort zone”  
o Expresses emotional response  
o Open/honest  
o Attractive  
o Visually pleasing  
o Creates at least half of the images  
o Obvious extra effort (not copied pages)  
o Authenticity and uniqueness of effort  
o Though provoking  
o Original  
o Strong expressions of “otherness” |         |        |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection 2</td>
<td>o Indicates how your perceptions and assumptions have changed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Indicates how this might affect your future teaching and adding/affirming diversity in your life</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions 3</td>
<td>o All grammar, spelling, punctuation correct</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Neatly presented</td>
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