

Provost/VPAA training session

Classroom Observations, Dr. Linda Serro

December 9, 2014

In attendance:

Dr. Denis G. Wright

Dr. Emery Alford

Dr. Kathy Clark

Dr. Marie Collins

Michelle Fanslau

Jeff Gibbs

Dr. Erin Harrell

Dr. John Meyer

Dr. Tom Rath

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

A Positive Experience for Professional Growth



- ▶ Discuss effective teaching
- ▶ Clarify the purpose(s) for classroom observations
- ▶ Identify observable behaviors related to your observation form
- ▶ Explore expectations for a pre-observation meeting
- ▶ Discuss basic good teaching components
- ▶ Explore how to handle the post-observation meeting
- ▶ Review what we've covered
- ▶ Q & A

AGENDA

- ▶ Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten. – B.F. Skinner, The New Scientist, May 21, 1964
- ▶ How do you know it when you see it?

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE TEACHING?

- ▶ **Engaged** in teaching
- ▶ Follow pedagogical **practices effective** in the discipline
- ▶ **Revise, refresh, rework** courses
- ▶ **Up-to-date curriculum**
- ▶ Trying to **improve**
- ▶ Contributing to the institution's **teaching mission in a serious way**
- ▶ **Supervise** undergraduates for research, internships, honors work

STARK & FREISHTAT 2014

- ▶ Actively **engaged**
- ▶ Climate of **inquiry** where students feel appropriately challenged
- ▶ **Joy** and **rigor**
- ▶ Structured occasions for **reflection**
- ▶ **Prior knowledge** & **diversity** of student experiences are **recognized** and built upon
- ▶ **Relevance** of content to professional, disciplinary and/or personal contexts
- ▶ Establishes a **community of learners** where dialogue is encouraged

BAIN 2004

- ▶ Uses a **variety** of teaching **methods**
- ▶ Clearly **articulated** expectations, goals, learning outcomes and requirements
- ▶ Facilitate **student responsibility** for learning
- ▶ **Appropriate** use of information and communication **technologies**
- ▶ Assessment and learning activities **support learning outcomes**
- ▶ Provide meaningful and timely **feedback**
- ▶ Teach **qualities and skills** the institution hopes its students will develop in a disciplinary content.

BAIN 2004 CONTINUED

- ▶ Faculty member who has "checked out"
- ▶ Teaching from the same stale lecture notes received 20 years ago
- ▶ Mumbling in a monotone, facing the board, scribbling illegibly
- ▶ Demeanor that discourages students from asking questions even if time is allowed for questions
- ▶ Unavailable to students outside of class
- ▶ Cancels class frequently
- ▶ Returns student work without specific comments or doesn't return work
- ▶ Refuses all invitations to supervise students.

WHAT TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS IS NOT

- ▶ Decision: What the instructor does OR what the students are learning.

PURPOSE OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

- ▶ Does the teaching help and encourage students to learn in ways that make a sustained, substantial and positive difference in the way they think, act, or feel—without doing them any major harm?

BIG QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- ▶ Is the material worth learning?
- ▶ Are the students learning what the course is supposedly teaching?
- ▶ Is the instructor helping and encouraging the students to learn (or do they learn despite the instructor)?
- ▶ Has the instructor harmed the students?

Bain, 2003

MORE SPECIFICALLY

- ▶ For each criterion, list behaviors you might observe.
- ▶ We'll share back and then compile a composite list for everyone.

USING YOUR OBSERVATION FORM

- ▶ An observation is a "snapshot" in time but it needs "context". Goal is to make the observation experience positive and help with continuous improvement.
- ▶ Schedule a short meeting with the faculty member prior to the observation to discuss the following:
 - ▶ Tell me about this class (e.g. number of students, their approaches to learning, willingness to participate, etc.)
 - ▶ What will you be teaching? Objectives for the day? Lesson plan?
 - ▶ Is there anything you would like me to specifically observe (e.g. review, introduction, movement around room, eye contact, questioning skills, etc.)
 - ▶ Where are you in the syllabus?

PRE-OBSERVATION MEETING

- ▶ Lesson plan for the class meeting to be observed
- ▶ Handouts to be used during the class session
- ▶ Syllabus

MATERIALS TO REQUEST

- ▶ Have a **plan** for the class meeting
- ▶ Tell or list objectives for the lesson:
 - ▶ Use action verbs, i.e. Review the periodic table, Discuss the purpose of persuasive writing
- ▶ Post or tell the activities for the class, i.e. an agenda
- ▶ Begin with a short review
- ▶ Check for understanding during the lesson
- ▶ Assess the objectives at the end of the lesson

WHAT DO GOOD TEACHERS DO?

- ▶ Schedule a post-observation meeting with the faculty member as soon as possible
- ▶ Share three kinds of information:
 - ▶ 1. strengths
 - ▶ 2. areas of growth/concern
 - ▶ 3. questions you may have about what you saw
- ▶ Develop an action plan with the faculty member

POST-OBSERVATION MEETING

- ▶ Focus on continuous improvement
- ▶ Pre-observation meeting
- ▶ Using the form
- ▶ Good teaching behaviors
- ▶ Post-observation meeting
- ▶ Plan of action

REVIEW



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Welcome from the Director

Welcome from the Director

Welcome to our Lucas Center for Faculty Development. The Lucas Center supports activities that help you grow as a teacher, which supports the FGCU's primary mission of teaching and mentoring students. Most of our topics and programs are the result of feedback from the FGCU faculty community perception of needs. Our center offers creative learning experiences focused in the areas of teaching, learning, assessment and scholarship. Watch for e-mails announcing activities that may interest you. I believe you will find the activities to be relevant, renewing and synergizing! Come join in the sharing of effective ideas that your colleagues are implementing and add to the conversation. Stop by to say hello and see our wonderful space in LIB 212, affectionately known as "The Living Room".

I think a lot about teaching and learning and how they focus my work in higher education. Students need both joy and rigor in the classroom. Students are motivated to learn when the tasks are appropriate, engaging, and just beyond their zone of proximal development so that they feel a sense of accomplishment when the light bulb of understanding shines. Teachers need to teach, not just tell. Teachers should model, think aloud, and make visible the invisible thinking necessary for learning. Learning never stops. College is not the end of learning. If an instructor stops learning his or her professional practices lose their cutting edge, enthusiasm, and effectiveness. Teaching and learning are components of a dynamic process based upon student need and teacher reflection.



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