SWAP SESSION NEWSLETTER
None of us is as smart as all of us. —Roy Disney

SWAP SESSION: “Trimming the Sails of Learning with Classroom Assessment” presented by Dr. Philip G. Cottell Jr.

Dr. Cottell is a professor in accountancy at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He is currently the coordinator of the Miami University Faculty Learning Community for Problem Based Learning, and he is also a co-author of a book entitled, Cooperative Learning for Higher Education of Faculty.

No. 29

Swap Session held: 2-18-02

Co-sponsored by the Faculty Exchange for Teaching Excellence, and the Partnership Grant

Dr. Cottell began by explaining how he chose the title of the swap session “Trimming the Sails of Learning with Classroom Assessment.” He stated that in sailing you must constantly adjust the sails on the sailboat in such a manner that you get the boat to move forward with the most efficiency. He related this to teaching in the fact that you must constantly be making adjustments to your teaching to create and maintain the strongest force of student learning.

During the swap session Dr. Cottell...

- Introduced and demonstrated some Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS).
  - Goal Ranking and Matching Exercise
  - Directed Paraphrasing
  - The Visible Quiz
- Provided several reasons to use CATS.
- Highlighted the differences between traditional assessment and classroom assessment.
1. Goal Ranking and Matching Exercise

Instructions:
Provide the class with a worksheet that contains these requirements:
- List 3 to 4 goals that you hope to achieve through participation in this class.
- Rank the goals in terms of their relative importance to you.
- Determine if your goals match the goals of the professor.

After the class has had time to list and rank their goals the presenter shares his/her class objectives and asks if anyone had any different goals.

Hints:
- Acknowledge three typical reasons that many students may provide for taking the course before they begin the CAT, (i.e., 1. I have to take this class because it is a core requirement. 2. I have to take this class because it is a major. 3. I want an A) to prompt their responses to be more in depth and useful for obtaining desired feedback.
- Tell the students if you do not think that you will meet their goal(s). This allows you to be totally honest, and eliminate any misconception before the course begins.

2. Directed Paraphrasing

Instructions:
- Ask the students to independently define a term in one or two concise sentences.
- Have the class discuss their answers or definitions in small groups.
- Ask the group leader to share their definition of the material with the class as a whole.

Hints:
- Prompt them to write a definition that will make sense to an individual who has never encountered this material. Hopefully, this will lead to a higher form of learning.
3. The Visible Quiz

Instructions:

- Put the students into groups.
- Hand out a folder to each group that contains the letters for multiple choice questions (e.g., a, b, c, and d) on a colored piece of paper.
- Present questions on an overhead.
- After a given amount of time and group discussion have one group member hold up the colored letter that corresponds with the correct multiple choice answer on the overhead.
- Provide prizes (e.g., candy bars) to the group that has the most correct answers.

Hints:
If one group does not agree or does not understand why that answer is correct, have another group explain the correct answer.

Possible Benefits Obtained from Using (CATS)

- Allows the teacher to make needed adjustments to teaching methods early within the semester.
- Determines how students are progressing.
- It increases student ownership.
- It increases student understanding and learning.
- It helps students clarify what the class objectives are, and may help improve the teacher’s evaluation scores (student’s know what to expect).
Dr. Cottell provided the primary differences between *classroom assessment* and *traditional assessment* to clarify the importance of administering classroom assessment techniques in every classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Assessment</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>Classroom Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* large scale</td>
<td></td>
<td>* small scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* institutional or state level</td>
<td></td>
<td>* college classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* measurement experts</td>
<td></td>
<td>* discipline based teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* emphasis on accountability</td>
<td></td>
<td>* emphasis on learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* what was learned in college</td>
<td></td>
<td>* what was learned in the class</td>
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**Upcoming Events!**

- Dr. Robert (Pete) Bill, DVM, Ph.D.  
  "How to Keep Your Presentations from Being a Dud: Avoiding Land Minds in the Lecture Hall."  
  March 12, 1:30 in Room #212 at the Student Union.

- Dr. Charles Glassick, Ph.D.  
  "Scholarship Reconsidered and Assessed" (encore presentation).  
  April 12, 9:30 in the Flint Hills Room at the Student Union.