SWAP SESSION NEWSLETTER

None of us is as smart as all of us.  -Roy Disney

SWAP SESSION: “Teaching Tips”
given by
Dr. Wilbert J. McKeachie, a Professor Emeritus in the department of Psychology at the University of Michigan. He is also the author of a very successful and practical book titled “Teaching Tips” (10th Edition, 1999).

No. 28
Swap Session held: 12-17-01
Sponsored by the Faculty Exchange for Teaching Excellence

Dr. McKeachie shared many teaching tips that he has found helpful in his teaching career, and he provided many opportunities for the group to swap ideas and analyze specific questions related to teaching dilemmas.

Dr. McKeachie emphasized the importance of having students write information on paper. He indicated that writing:
- Increases participation, attention, and involvement in class
- Provides a different mode of learning
- Helps students think deeper and activate previously learned knowledge
- Can prime students for what you are about to teach
- Gives students time to think about their response
Question #1
*Dr. McKeachie asked the group to discuss possible strategies that may increase class participation during a review session.*

**Ways to Increase Participation**

- Put students in groups and have each group determine one possible test question. Have each group appoint one member to present the question to the class; one member to write the question on the board; and one member report the correct answer following class discussion.
- Put students into groups and provide each group with a vague, complex question and ask them to break it down into a more direct, specific question that they would like to see on the test.
- Ask each student to write a possible test question on a piece of paper for a small grade, collect the papers and discuss the questions with the class to elicit deep thinking.
- Ask the students to turn in a question that they would like to see on the test at the beginning of the review session and discuss the questions in class.
- Have each student fill out a note card that identifies personal information about them and randomly call upon students to answer questions during class. Do not penalize for incorrect answers; however, require attendance.
- Relate information students report on their note cards to the curriculum covered during the class session.
- Present questions in class and provide students with time to look up and write down the answers, then call upon students to answer the questions. This increases the student’s response time and allows students to organize and link their thoughts.
Question #2
How can teachers motivate students in a required college class?

Contributions
- Ask the students to keep daily or weekly journals about the class.
- The teacher should come to class enthusiastic about the subject matter.
  - Use variable pitch
  - Use gestures
  - Be expressive
- Ask the students to email the teacher a reason for taking the class.
- Establish a personal relationship with the students.
- Relate the curriculum to real life situations.
- Welcome the students to bring newspapers and magazines to class that contain related material.

Dr. McKeachie identified student’s values and expertise as two significant components that will affect an individual’s motivation. In addition Dr. McKeachie emphasized the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motives that result in a student’s values.
- Value (interest, challenge, long and short term goals, immediate rewards)
- Expertise (student’s capabilities)

Question #3
What is your favorite teaching tip?
Favorite Teaching Tips

- Identify the objectives of the class.
- Focus on learning; do not provide an overwhelming amount of content.
- Be aware of the different learning styles (use different techniques with different students).
- Determine your guidelines for evaluation; however do not let evaluation methods restrict your teaching methods.

Upcoming Events!

- Dr. Phillip Cottell, February 18, 2002
  Professor of Accountancy, Coordinator of Miami University's Faculty Learning Community for Problem Based Learning
  Author of numerous articles on cooperative learning and Classroom Assessment Techniques
  Morning Session 9:30: “Trimming the Sails of Learning with Classroom Assessment Classroom Assessment”
  Afternoon Session 3:30: “Using Classroom Assessment Techniques to Promote Student Learning”

- Dr. Robert (Pete) Bill, March 12, 2002
  Associate Professor of Basic Medical Sciences, Director of the Veterinary Technology Distance Learning Program, Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine
  Afternoon session, time TBA: “How to Give Effective Large Lectures”