AERA Teaching Educational Psychology SIG
Tuesday Teaching Tips (T3s)

2023-2024 Academic Year

October 10, 2023
Mastery Goals
   A. A classroom culture that emphasizes mastery/learning goals is more effective in promoting student learning and growth than a classroom culture that emphasizes performance.
   B. One way to emphasize mastery over performance is to give students chances to revise assignments or retake quizzes. You can also weigh later versions more heavily. This shows students that you value their learning and growth over time, not their immediate success.
   C. To see more about this teaching tip, go to Boden, Zepeda, & Nokes-Malach, 2020.

October 24, 2023
Using Pre-work to Promote Active Learning and Engagement
   A. Pre-class reading response assignments with prompts that promote active and personal learning can help students better engage with course content.
   B. Prompts that encourage active and personal learning are in six categories: (1) identifying the problem, (2) making connections, (3) interpreting evidence, (4) challenging assumptions, (5) applying knowledge, and (6) taking another point-of-view.
   C. To see more about this teaching tip, go to Tomasek (2009).

November 14
Building student self-reflection into your class structures
   A. Engaging in self-regulated learning (SRL) can help students become active and motivated learners who are more self-aware and use effective strategies to improve their learning and understanding.
   B. One of many ways to promote students' self-evaluation skills within SRL is to build opportunities into your course for students to reflect on their work. Have students review their grade and your feedback while also reflecting on the strategies and approaches they used to complete the assignment. Finally, have them consider what they can do differently to succeed in the future.
   C. To learn more about this teaching tip and SRL, see Nguyen & Wolters (2023).

November 28

Managing Digital Distractions in the Classroom

    A. Digital distractions are a pervasive challenge in college classrooms. Rather than mandating a technology policy, college instructors should work collaboratively with their students to develop technology policies that identify appropriate and inappropriate use of electronic devices during class.

    B. For example, instructors and students may decide that cell phones should be put away during class time. As another example, instructors and students may agree that students can use laptops in class as long as they are staying on task. Developing technology policies collaboratively encourages students' reflection on their use of digital distractions and enhances students' feelings of autonomy and adherence to the policies.

    C. To see more suggestions for ways to reduce digital distraction use in the classroom, see [Flanigan, Brady, Dai, & Ray (2023).](#)

December 12

Effective Feedback

    A. Feedback is most effective when it is specific, includes next steps, avoids comparison to others, and is about the task and not the person

    B. Effective feedback to a writer working on paragraph structure might go something like this: "You have a clear topic sentence in this paragraph, but I am not clear on how the sentences that follow it really fit with the topic sentence. Go through your paragraph and check that each sentence applies to the overall topic."

    C. To see more about this teaching tip, see [Koenka & Anderman, 2019](#).

January 23

Promoting Self-Regulated Learning

    A. Instructors can support students' self-regulated learning by providing opportunities to actively plan, monitor, manage, and reflect on their own learning processes.

    B. Instructors can scaffold students' learning processes by using intentional pauses and help prompts ("what" am I learning, "how" am I learning, "why" am I learning). Instructors can also build activities to reflect on students' motivation and emotion for the class, enabling them to develop strategies for improving engagement (great mid-semester activity).

    C. To see more about this, see [Hensley et al. (2023)](#).

February 6, 2024

Teachers' use of cognitive empathy

    A. Instructors can be more responsive to diverse groups of students by practicing cognitive empathy toward their students; that is, by attempting to understand the context and interactions in a classroom from different students' perspectives.

    B. The practice of cognitive empathy is an ongoing process in which teachers continually attempt to understand how students experience the classroom and then address any perspectival divergence which can cause miscommunication or lack of motivation.

    C. To learn more about teachers' cognitive empathy and how it can benefit students see [Warren, 2014](#).

February 20, 2024

Just-in-Time Teaching

    A. Just-in-Time Teaching (JITT) is a technique that helps instructors be more responsive to students' learning needs by assigning a pre-class activity and using students' responses to tailor the class to students' needs.

    B. To implement JITT, teachers and instructors can follow these steps:

        a. Assign a short activity or assignment (e.g., short response question) to be completed and submitted before class that probes for potential understanding or misunderstanding of concepts students are learning about. Make sure to give yourself sufficient time to review students' work!

        b. Review students' responses to identify areas where the class may need additional support. Teachers can also incorporate students' responses into the upcoming lesson.

    C. To learn more about JITT, see [Novak (2011)](#).

March 5, 2024

Inequitable Feedback and Moving Forward

    A. Feedback can exacerbate inequities, specifically the feedback teachers give to Black and Latiné students which can have concerning motivational consequences. Black and Latiné students experience (a) less encouragement compared to their white counterparts, (b) a positive feedback bias, and (c) more negative feedback.

    B. However, instructors can provide more motivationally-supportive feedback, by (1) reducing bias (i.e. developing critical racial and cultural consciousness; checking viewpoints - are you taking a color-evasive approach?) and (2) providing motivationally-supportive feedback (e.g. be specific and task focused; provide steps for improvement).

    C. To see more about this teaching tip, see [Nicolai, Koenka, and Braxton (2023)](#).

March 19, 2024

Identity Exploration in Teaching

    A. Teaching that supports students' identity exploration can improve student sense of belonging, achievement, motivation, and wellbeing.

    B. Identity exploration in relation to curricular materials can foster deep meaning. One useful framework is the PRESS model that includes four design principles: (a) promoting self-relevance; (b) triggering exploration; (c) facilitating a sense of safety; and (d) scaffolding exploratory actions.

    C. To see more about this teaching tip, go to [Kaplan, Sinai, and Flum (2014)](#) or [Kaplan, Bridgelal, and Garner (2020)](#)

April 2, 2024

Wrapping Up Courses at the End of the Semester

    A. How teachers end their courses can provide students with closure, reinforced what they learned throughout the semester, promote interest in course content, and foster
    student-teacher interactions.

    B. Teachers can meaningfully wrap up their courses through a variety of activities, including but not limited to:

        a. Revisiting course goals/objectives/essential questions;

        b. Having a summary/review session of course material (or turning this into a game for students);

        c. Having students reflect on their learning and development over the course of the semester;

        d. Celebrating students for their hard work and effort.

    C. For more ideas on ways to end a course, see [Eggleston and Smith (2002)](#).

2024-2025 Academic Year

September 10, 2024

Jigsaw to Facilitate Cooperative Learning

    A. The jigsaw method is commonly used to facilitate not only cooperative learning but also the development of positive social relationships among students.

    B. The jigsaw can be implemented in six steps:
        1. Divide students into jigsaw groups
        2. Divide lesson into segments
        3. Assign each student a segment to learn
        4. Divide students into preparation groups of the same lesson segment
        5. Bring students back into jigsaw groups for cooperative learning
        6. Evaluate group process and learning

    C. For detailed implementation steps, see [Nalls and Wickerd (2023)](#).

September 24, 2024

Using Case Studies to Solve Complex Real-Life Problems

    A. Case studies are a teaching tool commonly used in law, medical, and business schools but can be adapted for use in any discipline or field and are especially relevant to teacher education. They promote problem-solving and critical thinking by having students analyze and make decisions in the context of complex real-life problems.

    B. There are two main steps to implementing case-based learning:
        a. Write a case for study using pre-existing materials or developed from scratch; cases can focus on:
            i. Dilemmas that require students to make nuanced decisions,
            ii. Appraisals that teach students how to analyze and understand the situation, and
            iii. Case histories that demonstrate how problems were analyzed and solved
        b. Teach the case in class through one of several formats:
            i. Discussion
            ii. Debate
            iii. Problem-based learning
            iv. Collaborative groups

    C. For more details on how to implement the case study in your classroom, see [Herreid (1994)](#), [Raju & Sankar (1999)](#), [Cohen et al., 2017)](#), and the [University of Queensland's guide](#).

October 8, 2024

Using Mid-Semester Feedback to Improve Teaching Practices

    A. Mid-semester feedback is a way for teachers to gain valuable insights into students' experiences in class prior to the end of the semester (when course evaluations typically take place). As teachers, we can use mid-semester feedback from students to gauge their learning and to improve our teaching practices to create better learning environments.

    B. To obtain mid-semester feedback from your students:
1. Create a survey or form that allows students to anonymously provide feedback; you can include a mix of closed- or open-ended prompts asking about content, teaching practices, etc.
2. Let your students know that you want their anonymous feedback to help you improve your teaching and the classroom environment
3. After you're done collecting students' responses, read through their feedback and note any common themes or patterns
4. Plan out what you will/will not change and prepare a response to your class
5. Explain the general findings of the survey to your class along with any changes you plan to make

    C. For examples of what feedback to solicit from students, see [Lewis (2001)](#) and [Donlan and Byrne (2020)](#).

October 22, 2024

Universal Design for Learning to Make Learning More Accessible for All Students

    A. Universal design for learning (UDL) is a framework and approach to teaching and learning that emphasizes meeting the needs and skills of all learners by designing courses to be more flexible and accommodating to students.

    B. Teachers can make their teaching more inclusive by following the three principles of UDL:
        a. Multiple means of representation: different ways to present course content to learners with different perceptual, language, and prior knowledge.
        b. Action and expression: multiple opportunities for learners to interact with one another and the course content.
        c. Multiple means of engagement: ensuring that their course and teaching are motivating to diverse learners and creating an inclusive climate.

    C. To learn more about UDL and the specifics of how to implement it in your classroom, see [Fovet (2020)](#) and the [CAST website.](#)

November 5, 2024

Maintaining Students' Attention through the Use of In-Class Quizzes

    A. It can be easy for students to get distracted during class, especially if the course content is more challenging than usual. There are multiple ways to help your students pay more attention, one of which is to use in-class quizzes to promote students' engagement with course content.

    B. In-classes quizzes:

        a. Should be brief, no more than a few questions that take several minutes to complete.

        b. Can be a mastery quiz given at the beginning and end of class to assess mastery on a concept covered during class.

        c. Or a concept check to test students' knowledge during class.

    C. To learn more about using in-class quizzes to motivate students to pay more attention, and their exam performance benefits, see Nevid and Armata (2024).

November 19, 2024

Creating Identity-Safe Learning Environments

    A. Students from marginalized backgrounds may be more vulnerable to social identity threat – concern they will be devalued or negatively judged because of their identities (i.e., race, gender, etc.). As teachers, we can mitigate identity threat by incorporating identity-safety cues into our classroom and our teaching, which can promote students' belonging, motivation, and performance.

    B. Identity-safety cues come in many forms. Cues that we as teachers can control and make explicit include:

        a. Messaging that endorses diversity and inclusivity in your syllabi or LMS page;

        b. Making it clear to students that you endorse growth mindset beliefs;

        c. Exposing students to exemplars with similar identities when you bring in speakers.

    C. To learn more about identity-safety cues and psychological safety, see Kruk & Matsik (2021) and Muenks et al. (2020).

December 3, 2024

Student-Centered Teaching and Learning Through Course Syllabi

A. One way teachers communicate policies and expectations through course syllabi, but how syllabi are structured and presented can shape students' perceptions of the instructor and the course. Syllabi that are more student-centered help students feel more welcome and perceive instructors as more approachable and warmer.

B. A student-centered syllabus should communicate:
   a. How the instructor will build a learning community through their availability and promotion of collaboration.
   b. How power and control is shared between the instructor and students.
   c. How students' learning will be evaluated and the goals of said evaluations.

C. For more information on student-centered syllabi, see Cullen & Harris (2009), as well as Harnish & Bridges (2011) and Wagonner Denton & Veloso (2018) for studies on syllabi student perceptions.

December 17, 2024

Feedback Orientation

A. Teacher feedback can help students learn and improve, but how feedback is structured can impact how students perceive and receive feedback. Future-oriented feedback provides students with ways to improve and prevent mistakes in future learning tasks, whereas past-oriented feedback tends to focus on identifying mistakes that students made.

B. Teachers and instructors can provide future-oriented feedback by:
   a. Identifying mistakes but also explain why students may make such mistakes,
   b. Providing suggestions for what students can do in the future,
   c. Providing feedback on students' thinking processes that lead to their answers and not just the answers alone.

C. Feedback orientations can vary across students and may interact with goal orientations. To learn more, see Gjerde et al. (2022).

January 14, 2025

Helping Student Set Goals

A. Goals play an important role in self-regulated learning (SRL) by helping direct planning, strategy use, and serving as standards for monitoring and evaluation. However, students don't always set high-quality goals (both macro- and micro-level) that help them self-regulate and perform at a high level.

B. Teachers and instructors can encourage students to set high-quality micro-goals (e.g., studying for a class) that exhibit the following characteristics:
   a. Time-specific: goal includes a specific timeframe to break down
   b. Content-specific: goal outlines specific content that to be learned

c. Action-specific: goal includes specific learning actions or behaviors involved in the learning process
   d. Standard-specific: goal articulates specific standards against which students will evaluate their own progress
C. For more tips on how to promote effective goal-setting more broadly, see [Zeiser (2018)](#) and [McCardle et al. (2017)](#).

January 28, 2025
Incorporating Mindfulness in the Classroom

A. Many students experience a lot of stress, both academic and non-academic, that can negatively affect their learning process and experience. Teachers can help students better manage these stressors by incorporating mindfulness practices in the classroom that encourage students to be more intentional, attentive, and aware of the present without judgement.
B. Teachers can promote mindfulness by implementing brief activities and techniques such as:
   a. Activities that encourage more deliberate attention to their breathing ([see here for examples](#))
   b. Meditation activities that help students become more aware of their physical state ([see here for examples](#))
   c. Contemplative activities that encourage students to become more aware of their thoughts and emotions ([see here for examples](#))
C. To learn more about the effects of mindfulness practices on student learning, socio-emotional outcomes, and well-being, see [Nagpal & Radliff (2023)](#), [Verhaeghen (2023)](#), [Vilvens et al. (2020)](#).

February 11, 2025
Transparency in Teaching

A. By enacting transparent teaching practices and being upfront with students about what and how they will learn, teachers can help students engage more deeply in their learning process and promote adaptive motivation and metacognition.
B. Some examples of transparent teaching methods include:
   a. Inviting students to help plan class agendas and activities in advance to select subtopics they wish to learn more about;
   b. Debriefing assignments, exams, or papers with the entire class to common patterns and open up discussions for how students can improve in the future;
   c. Verbalize students' thinking processes during class discussions and invite students to share their thought processes.
C. To learn more about transparency in learning and teaching, see [Winkelmes (2023)](#), [Copeland et al. (2018)](#), and [Anderson et al. (2013)](#). The [Transparency in Learning and Teaching](#) website also has many resources for teachers and students.

February 25, 2025
Promoting Socially Shared Regulation of Learning in Collaborative Groups

A. Socially shared regulation of learning (SSRL) refers to collectively shared or interdependent regulatory processes, beliefs, and knowledge by members of a group when working together. As teachers, we can help students practice metacognitive awareness, group planning, and group reflection through the use of prompts, scripts, or structured time prior to or during group work.
B. There are five principles to promote SSRL for collaborative work. They are applicable at all stages of a group project/activity.
    a. Create opportunities for students to monitor their group's progress
    b. Have students identify potential issues their group might encounter
    c. Encourage students to come up with solutions as a group to address issues
    d. Encourage students to develop a priority list for team tasks
    e. Have students assign their group members to specific tasks
C. To learn more about how to create prompts to guide students as they work in groups, see Kim & Lim (2018). For more information on SSRL, see Panadero & Järvelä (2015).

March 11, 2025
Promoting Social-Emotional Learning in the Classroom

A. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is associated with improved student well-being and performance. SEL involves five key areas: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills.
B. As teachers, we can explicitly promote students' competency in the five SEL areas using a variety of brief activities that include but aren't limited to:
    a. Having students write a self-compassion letter about an aspect of themselves they don't like while expressing expression and understanding
    b. Having students identify a realistic goal and explicitly document the steps they need to take to achieve their goal
    c. Having students complete a stress reappraisal activity to identify current stressors and reframing them
C. To learn more about SEL, see the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) website. For details on how to implement SEL activities in your classroom (or outside of class), see Stocker and Gallagher (2019) and Gallagher and Stocker (2018).

March 25, 2025
Providing Students with Closure at the End of a Course
A. A meaningful end to a course can help students process and reflect on what they have learned in the course while also giving them a more positive outlook on the next semester/quarter.
B. Teachers can consider a variety of approaches to the last week or day of class:

a. Instructor-centered approaches, which can include providing the class with congratulatory remarks on completing the course, along with reinforcing key concepts and ideas from the course.
   b. Activity-centered approaches involve activities that facilitate reflection, such as having students critique the course with the goal of revising it for the next semester. Teachers who want to help students review for the final exam can also gamify review sessions to make them more fun.
   c. Student-centered approaches give students more flexibility on how they want to end the course; this can be achieved through structured activities with greater choice and autonomy such as a one where students can share artifacts or representations of what the course meant to them.
C. For more ideas on how to wrap up the semester, see Burgess-Van Aken (2017) and Lang (2008).