A lot of pedagogy advice on here comes from folks who teach at selective schools and doesn't really apply to my work. If you teach at an open enrollment institution, what is your best teaching advice? Big things, little things, anything that you think matters.

Copied from https://twitter.com/Lady_Historian/status/1588296005086498817

Mine is that it's okay to jettison content in favor of skills building if that's what they need

I have no-fault flexibility on dates now, because my students are older, work a lot, have kids etc. Lots of life happening. Also, I've learned to separate assessments of what they're learning in class from the wide variety of backgrounds they bring into it.

High poverty public high school w/ open enrollment AP courses here. 20+ years in. Relationship and trust over content instruction, content instruction and writing skills over assessments + compassion, flexibility and grace.

Rolling submission on all assignments, grading for completion on assignments big and small, always ready to shift content and rigor depending on how many you learn also are working or are parents. Give credit for their life experiences by building narratives into assignments.

If you model doing the task in addition to providing instructions, that can help a lot, especially with students who may be learning English while in classes with you.

Center discussion on their understandings of the readings and their questions rather than my own.

Regular review of fundamentals as you add new concepts. Concise and easy-to-follow explanations. Use of flow charts and mind maps to sort through through large amounts of information. Rubrics that set out expectations clearly.

Graphics are huge! Not downplaying the importance of reading words at all. Good graphics can help decrease cognitive overload while increasing retention and understanding

I feel this. I'm still really new to an open enrollment campus, but learning a lot this semester. My biggest takeaway is break-out groups and doing media projects to show students that information is relevant.

In an online class, do not under any circumstances ever require a discussion post for any reason. They are less than useless. Let them go and spend your time doing literally almost anything else and it will have 300% more value.

I also NEVER ever ever ever EVER require a textbook. Under any circumstances. If you know what you're doing you don't need one anyway, and students will thank you for it.

Don't assume prior knowledge. I start with a basics of US government so everyone is on the same page before we start real content.

Community college here: different project versions for students with different needs are SUPER useful. the students doing version "A" broadly seem to be encouraging of students doing version "1" and vice versa

I was mistakenly worried that adjusting the bar would make some students feel weird about having an "easier" project, or those doing my first version would feel like another student got off easy; Gen Z at large seems to appreciate the difference between equity and equality.

Especially with freshman, teach them all all skills and content as if none of them have ever had any of it before: steps, scaffold, build, repeat, peer examples, teacher examples, and take steps back frequently to continue going forward.

Be transparent about why things are the way they are – that extends to class policies, university policies, social structures… if you feel like you can't explain it for one reason or another, that might be a sign you need to reevaluate the policy.

If you have assigned texts, wait 2 weeks before you assign something from them. Most of your students will register in the week before/1st week of class and May not have them in the first 10 days.

I'm trying to use more Open Educational Resources for this very reason (although I also want writers to get paid for their work. A beautiful thing about OER is that it's often grant funded).

Don't assume students know how to search for information. I walk them through the library website, databases, newspaper archives, etc.

100% this. Many students do not get as much experience writing and researching as you might expect. Explain the pitfalls of Wikipedia. Send them to Purdue OWL and other writing tools.

Meet the students where they are and set them up to succeed, not fail.

Walk them through how to read! I dedicated nearly 45 min one class to teach them about finding an argument, methodology, etc. and then followed up on this skill several other times.

Let the top student know who they are, on each exam and the course as a whole. They will be proud and grateful. I also email students every time they miss class, so they know I am paying attention, and I can judge slept in differently from family crisis or illness.

I have a lot of low stakes assignments. If there's an in–class exam, I give the questions in advance with a graphic organizer. Students can bring graphic organizer, outline, and copy of primary source to exam. I try to decrease their stress level.

Any time we are reading a poem I ask students to make a list of the words they had to look up and we talk about them in class together.

Scaffolding, make it okay to go over basic skills, but more important let them know you believe that they can do the work.

I am at an open enrollment university. Remember that many of your students might be first generation or are working full time. To echo what has been said, personal connection and compassion for the challenges they have has helped.

When you're imparting content, frame it as a journey with lots of detail about setting. Biggest compliment I ever got was when a student called me Miss Frizzle.

Have multiple avenues of access for course content, UDL is super important and allows for *everyone* to succeed: have videos, podcasts, and readings available and let students choose what is best for them. Also, having more hands-on content (working with primary sources, learning games, and in class discussion) is super helpful.

CUNY, so probably halfway between selective and open? 1st hw is pass/fail introduce yourself &:what excites & scares you on the syllabus intro to the homework submission tool. Flexible deadlines + incentives for helping classmates w/ work & seeking help from classmates.

This is an underutilized key: make a beginner route, like in a video game, where students skill up in your class for low stakes. Love it.

Also (and I know this isn't necessarily feasible for contingent faculty) my late submission policy is "Talk to me about it, and we will work it out"

Teach what the cohort needs, rather than what you want to teach. And sometimes the students who ask for a lot of attention aren't the ones who need the most. The ones to worry about are those who aren't necessarily very visible.

Giving my students grace is the best thing I've learned as an instructor. The ones who need it always far outnumber the ones that might try to take advantage. As I've seen above, I also allow late assignments to be turned in until the final day of classes for the semester.

I will say though... I am able to allow late assignments because I'm not assigning multiple papers over a full load of classes. I've moved my assessments online and allow open notes, open book, and open timing for them. Works well for small, low stakes assessing!

Take your class to the library and make sure they know how to ise it. Invite the librarian to your class. Each time they go makes going again more likely and helps them do well.

Use inclusive language about College , "now that you are a College student". Normalize their belonging.

Respect their thought processes. Find ways to indicate that respect. Offer contributions not critiques: "let me give you something to think about..."

Do whatever it takes to keep your faith in the transformative power of learning. Our students can smell BS and condescension a mile away. They are being asked complex and abstract stuff, often while also working and caregiving. They are amazing people!

Give handouts that have full description and templates. This allows many to jump into an assignment without worrying about format.

What I've learned: Read things in the classroom if you want students to discuss even if they are supposed to do it before class.

Have boundaries, but be flexible. Work with them. They appreciate it. Once students see that you see them as the responsible people that they are with lives to live (i.e. possibly working, family to take care of, etc.), they should respond and communicate with you better.

Use stories. They can understand dense concepts too but you have to make it mean something.

Find the almost impossible line separating talking down to them and assuming they know certain things.

Show and analyze model writings. Whether pro or from other students. Get into some metacognition by dedicating time to reflection and feedback. Build up to big assignments by having students read your feedback and set intentions around what they want to improve on.

Simply asking students what they want/need is very imformative and will build immense trust.

Give tests in 2 parts - one part on which they can use class notes. Weight them about the same. It encourages note-taking and, as a result, helps them retain information.

Patience. & be alert for...I think this was Mina Shaughnessy's phrase--"the intelligence of the error." Sometimes an off-base thing they say has an internal reasoning they can explain. They're thinking, just maybe not the way you'd expect, & there might be a nugget there.

I learnt about ASK. Attitudes, skills and knowledge. Good teaching requires enriching the student in all three areas. I design elements of each into the class.

Do not shy away from your non-traditional aged students. At some point (if not now), they will be the ones that get your jokes and your generational experience! Learn from them.

teach people how to learn

Rigorous doesn't mean super strict policies and incredibly difficult content.

Pedagogies of Kindness only work if you are kind to yourself first.

Have compassion for your students' time. At an open enrollment university, every single one of my students is managing their time under pressure. Work, family, school, more work, and on and on. Flexibility gives students the chance to succeed.

We read primary sources in class and they use different color highlighters to visualize elements of the sources. For example, we read the Lowell Mills handbook. I had them highlight rules they liked and didn't like (as I read them aloud and we discussed. After that, they looked at what color@was most prominent. This became a good discussion about the biases historians bring when read sources. Then they had to write a diary entry from the perspective of a mill girl, referring to specifics in the handbook.

My best advice is don't be afraid to stop and play. Kinesthetic activities keep their attention. I have this one activity that builds chronological thinking and keeps them on their feet the entire class. They love it.

Get students to talk to each other. I hated "group work" as a student, but it's incredibly useful for my students now. Lots of students who don't talk in a class of 30 or 40 will talk to their peers. If it leads to some speaking up in class, great. If not it's even more important.

For US surveys I tied the history of the community to larger events. We used local slave ordinances, New Deal projects that are still standing, the Japanese tea garden that was known as the Chinese tea garden because of anti-Japanese sentiment during WWII.

I'm not big on pedagogical theory backed by anecdotal evidence. I'm all about figuring out where my students are relative to where they're supposed to be at the end of the course and then doing whatever it takes--to hell with what everyone else tells me--to get them there.

People don't care what you know, they want to know you care. Best teaching advice I ever received.

The ultimate accountability is the work. You need more time? Sure. You need another draft? Absolutely. You want to conference about work or just shoot the shit to relieve some of the pressure you're feeling, doing this new/brave thing? It would be my pleasure.

2 things I love for a course I'm teaching at a state university: "open zoom" instead of office hours, and an "unfinal" where they apply a key concept they learned over the semester in any way they choose. It's forensics. We get poems, skeleton cookies. Love it.

Teach (explain, model, practice, review) independent work behaviors. Over and over again. Give meaningful (to the kids) work. Allow time for kids to be doing work, not listening to directions. Work with groups and confer 1-to-1. Keep doing the next thing.

One of the best things is to have students post a Canvas discussion with a prompt like "From what you read for today, what do you think you understand, what do you think you kinda-sorta understand, and what is just not clear to you? Also, ask a question about anything." I make these due 10 min before class and try to read them as I prep. They give a lot of feedback on how to tweak whatever it is I planned that day or cause a new handout or even assignment tweak to emerge.

Always treat your students like smart and worthy human beings.

Some things that helped: Giving points for coming to office hours for the first time. Mandatory ungraded draft for the first writing assignment, with feedback to clarify requirements. No out-of-class group work—can't assume people have time btw two jobs…

Learning everyone's name in the first week and making a show of it. On the first day, introducing myself through a "Where I come from" story—this was great advice that got me out of the East Coast elite "this is my credential" mode of self-introduction. …

BELIEVE in the ability of your students. Value and validate knowledge that might not look or sound like you expect it to look or sound. Allow brilliance.

I moved from a selective school (not very, but fairly) to a school that was much less so. A couple of things I did. One cut back on reading assignments. Reading less but thoroughly is fine. I circled back to fundamental concepts more frequently. I really worked on rubrics more.

Begin with listening to students. Find out how they learn, what they feel they need in terms of skills, how do they use questioning strategies, reading process etc.

Listen to your students and trust what they say. When they are struggling, don't assume it's "laziness" or "carelessness" and respond with more hardship. There is always a complex issue preventing them from doing the work, so ask them and trust them. They all want to do better. The next step is: Ensure your course has time for you to do so (i.e., listen to your students) and adjust accordingly. Creating individualized (i.e., differentiated) path can be life-changing for students, especially in 1st, 2nd term courses. Hard work but worth it.

Be aware that your students may have a long history of being distrusted, harassed, and marginalized by their K–12 experience. Be aware that they may come from schools that emphasized correct behavior rather than collaboration and self–advocacy.

I use open–note untimed exams and even put lecture where answer can be found in questions. I also do not enforce deadlines. Both seem to work well.

Take–home exams. Grades are not significantly different than they were for in–class exams, and students don't have stress of completing it in a fixed time (like a class period). Also solves problem of students needing extra time or quiet place with accommodations.

1) Love your students 2) Content is irrelevant (building critical thinking skills trumps teaching "The Classics").

I have a lot of thoughts about this, but one of the basic ones is just to cultivate an "infrastructural" perspective: which structures are in place at your institution, and which are missing (or, at least, "leaky"). Things as basic as wifi, logins, office hours, etc.

I took so much for granted at first, and have since learned how important it is to confirm (usually through anonymous, informal polling) that students are actually able to access what they need.

A lesson learned was to switch from having one traditional term paper to smaller, more frequent writing assignments. Advantages: More overall writing, more opportunities to learn from feedback.

Extensions, flexible deadlines, or no due dates at all.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching is the best. Winkelmas and colleagues are doing amazing work.

As someone who went from unstructured homeschool to community college to selective college and now probably grad school next – the biggest thing I wish I'd had along the way was to be provided with examples of what my finished work should be like.

Teach the students you have, not who you think they should be. Too often faculty forget they are in higher ed because they like it, because school was something they excelled at and found comforting. That is not an average student's experience.

Be flexible and don't punish them for what life throws at them.

Mine is that you don't necessarily have to give them ALL THE DETAILS. What you need to do is find a way to get them interested enough to go find the details for themselves, about any topic.

Yes! Telling a story is more important than bombarding them with trivia.

Learn the names of students. Use a free polling software like MS Forms or slido. Use LMS to guide them through content. Use three learning strategies – distributed practice, interleaving and practice tests. Use LMS automatic grading for fluency prep/check. frequent testing.

So much expertise and solid advice in this thread! All the difficult decisions become easier when intentionally centering: learning. That requires flexibility and disrupting standard ways of doing. Take care to notice if some other goal is overriding learning and cut it out.

Prioritize building community in your classes. Show your students they belong in your class, at your school, etc.

Offer (or require them to get) lots of help on writing assignments.

Repeatedly extend grace to students. Give multiple chances. Believe their excuses. Support them by showing interest. Use their names.

(Open access, lots of high-risk students for me). I reach out multiple times to students who disappear. Sometimes one or two of them claw their way back to a passing grade because I gave them some grace.

A student today told me students don't ask questions because they are worried the professor will think they are dumb. Make sure they aren't worried that YOU will think they are dumb. Make a place where they can ask questions & be wrong safely, so they can learn.