

## Some Suggestions to Improve the Quality of Higher Instruction

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### Abstract

Teaching and learning practices in higher education urgently need improvement.

The major concerns are centering on the following questions:

- ! How will students' learning outcomes be assured and improved in learning environment?
- ! How will effective communication and interaction be established with students in instruction?
- ! How will instructors motivate students to learning?

This paper will examine new challenges for instructors and provide some suggestions for instructors to design and deliver effective instruction.

**Key words:** Higher education, quality.

### Introduction

Some of higher education's most challenging goals include enhancing critical thinking, promoting "deep" (as opposed to superficial) learning, encouraging both self-esteem and the acceptance of others, and improving interpersonal effectiveness (with a an emphasis on team skills). As the primary key to ensuring the quality of instruction instructors need to adjust their attitudes to teach, understand what qualifications are needed and to know what they can do ensure the quality of instruction. As Deubel (2003) has argued, an instructor's attitude, motivation, and true commitment affect much of the quality of instruction. Instructors need to discover students' learning preferences, integrate technology tools, apply appropriate instructional techniques, put them all into practices, and generate the most suitable method for individuals.

Since the role of instructors has been changed in courses to facilitator, mentor and coach, instructors will be need to adjust their attitudes towards technology. Instructors need to know to design interactive activities and course syllabi, how to operate the learning platform.

Two key variables of the learning experience in interactive classrooms are: a) who is leading the learning process (instructor or learner), and b) whether or not students are studying alone or in a group. But although active student involvement is necessary for learning, numerous studies of college classrooms reveal that faculty tend to lecture.

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Rontlap and Eurelings (2002) experimental study revealed that when students are learning in a problem-based practical learning, more interaction of students are caused, and students learn more actively. Therefore, integrating deep learning, critical thinking, collaborative learning, and problem-based learning methods into instruction is critical for instructors to improve the quality of instruction. This requires the instructors to design collaborative and problem-based projects which will involves students to think critically, actively, and deeply.

To ensure the effectiveness of learning environment, a detailed course plan is required. The course plan should include, but not limited to analysing both students' and instructors' needs and class objectives, discussion topics, projects, and tests, envisioning any potential technical or academic problems.

The students' learning styles should be examined. As they visual, print, aural, or interactive learners? A simple questionnaire can help the instructors know more about his/her students' learning styles. When organising the content for courses, the learners' need must be taken into account. The amount students learn, their ability to apply learned skills into practice, and their satisfaction with the learning experience should be considered.

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Evaluation is also an important component when implementing instructional design principles into course design, because it is the way the gauge students' learning outcome and the quality of course instruction (Zheng and Smaklino 2003). Learning outcomes should not be able only measured through students' grades, but also through their deep learning, higher order thinking, critical thinking, or problem-solving skills.

Alley and Jansak (2001) have also identified ten keys to quality learning. The authors suggested that courses will be high quality when they are student-centered when:

- knowledge is constructed, not transmitted.
- Student can take full responsibility for their learning.
- students are motivated to want to learn.
- the course providers “mental white space” for reflection.
- learning activities appropriately match student learning styles.

The master faculty is able to guide the overall learning process. Professionally prepared and accountable leadership and faculty can develop a more positive and supportive culture on campus, build community and improve faculty and staff morale, and produce the high quality results society now urgently needs and is asking us to provide.

Below some recommendations has been made on how to prepare instructors for quality instruction.

- Faculty must be supported in their use of new technologies for learning and also in their use of technology for professional development and collaboration.
- Innovative methods of design and delivery of content and course method should be undertaken.
- Faculty should establish clear goals for students outcomes in each lesson to ensure deeper understanding of context, good participation, fewer class management problems.
- Faculty should not only aim at facts and concepts in the disciplines. They also should aspire to develop students' thinking skills.
- Curiosity in the subject area and independent learning should be encouraged.
- Communication between students and teaching faculty should be encouraged.
- Academic advising is widely agreed by authorities to be powerful tool for improving student success. Research on college student suggest that activities like advising could increase students' involvement in their college experiences.
- New skills required in info-society abilities to quickly adapt to new situations and new technologies and to be able to process vast amounts of information.
- Principles, and school boards must provide faculty with adequate training and support to effectively use the technology in their classrooms.
- Faculty should provide a secure, supportive, yet challenging environment in which students will be stimulated to reach a high level of intellectual attainment.
- Content and teaching strategies should be reviewed regularly and variety of teaching strategies and learning activities should be provided.
- Opportunities for students to relate their learning experience to the workplace/community should be provided.
- Recent developments in the field of study should be incorporated.
- Faculty should stop to stop viewing teaching as “covering the content” and to start viewing it as “helping the students learn”. Effective and sympathetic guidance and advice should be provided.
- Much work needs to be done by higher education to adapt its focus from traditional learning methods to create a culture that will allow the environment to be more stimulating, more flexible, and more creative where students have their own responsibility to develop varied learning experiences connecting interesting, people and new ideas throughout the world.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

To ensure the quality of instruction, the qualification of instructors should be a first consideration. Second, it is important for instructors to master, design, and delivery strategies, techniques, and methods for teaching courses. Third, the institution should provide technical and financial support for faculty.

Moore (2001) also noted that to effectively deliver courses, faculty must promote student to student interaction with minimal faculty interaction, engage students in regular assignments, cultivate students' self-directed abilities, and then provide specialised attention to students who lack self-directedness. Faculty provides structure to student work, encouraging self-direction.

To provide quality instruction, qualified instructors must be prepared first. It will be very important for higher education to realise that it needs to help its students identify trends and see newly emerging patterns and connections, and develop emotional skills to help them risk being truly creative.

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will need to be introduced to new principles that will gird and dynamic and constantly changing society. 21<sup>st</sup> century learners develop the capacity to become "self-educating persons". As a result, higher education should rethink how create a learning environment to prepare graduates for 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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