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Guide to Tutorials

Tasmanian Institute of

Learning and Teaching

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This handout has been prepared for ELT 501 by Natalie Brown (TILT) with original sources acknowledged in text. Acknowledgement is also made of contributions from Andrea Adam, Sharon Thomas and Jillian Smith (TILT). Links to sources of information have been provided for further reference.

1 Planning for a tutorial

It is excellent practice to plan for your classes. The following table outlines what is important in planning. The column on the right gives examples of questions you can ask yourself when undertaking this planning. You might like to write yourself a planning template that you can use for each class – this might be electronic or hard copy. This is useful to refer to in your class – to keep note of timing – and to annotate with any changes or suggestions for future tutorials.   
An example template is included as an appendix.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Select topic and determine the goal of the lesson.** | What are the key concepts, ideas and theories? Why are these important? |
| **Determine prior learning and skills.** | What understanding do the students already have? What are their (and your) preconceptions and misconceptions?  (See section below) |
| **Decide on student learning outcomes and indicators of students' progress.** | What will students know, and be able to do, by the end of the session? What indicators will you use to determine if students have achieved these outcomes? *One useful approach is to write lesson outcomes, expressed using verbs to indicate what the students will achieve.* |
| **Select and organise resources.** | What resources are available to design and use as part of the session? *Some resources you might find helpful are text books, colleagues' notes, on-line resources and applicable teaching articles.* (See appendix for an example.) |
| **Determine a sequence for the development of knowledge and skills.** | What is the optimal ordering of the material to consolidate and extend students' knowledge? At what stage should background material and notation be introduced? How will the current theory be linked with previous work? |
| **Select appropriate teaching strategies and assessment tasks.** | What experiences will consolidate students' understanding and allow them to demonstrate their achievement of the lesson outcomes? (See sections below.) |
| **Reflect on and evaluate the lesson** | How can you use feedback from students to respond to the experience and characteristics of your student cohort?  (See section below, and appendix for an example) |

Source: AustMS Introductory Unit for teachers in the Mathematical Sciences

2 Introducing the first tutorial

The first tutorial is vitally important for setting the tone for the remainder of the semester or unit. First impressions do count – think about what is really important in making a good first impression. From your own experiences, you probably want to see that the tutor is interested in the subject and in the students, is familiar with the requirements of the unit and is approachable and helpful. Here is a checklist that may help you get started:

* Prior to the tutorial familiarise yourself with the classroom. Can you use the technology (if necessary)? Are the desks and chairs placed in a way that will support your style of teaching (for example to allow groups work)?
* Familiarise yourself with the unit outline and allow time to seek clarification with the unit coordinator if necessary. Make sure you have a copy for reference. Clarify who you are expecting in your tutorial if possible through a class list, and ascertain any requirements for recording attendance.
* Introduce yourself. When you walk into the room full of students look around and make eye contact with your students - smile into the class. Say hello to nearby students. Write your name on the board, indicating how you would like to be called. You might also like to let students have an insight into you and why you are tutoring in the subject. Is it an area of PhD interest? Did you have employment in the area? If this is your first ever tutorial, you might feel comfortable in sharing this. Remember there will be students who are feeling quite nervous too!
* Are there administrative issues you should address immediately? For example, tell students the unit code (and check you are all in the right room and at the right time). Are students aware of how to, and when to, contact you for any questions? Setting consultation times is very important. If it is more appropriate to contact the unit coordinator, this is a good time to reiterate this to students.
* Give as much information in writing as possible, so that students who did not attend class can access via the website, but also to reinforce the information for those present. Information that is spoken but not written down is easily missed especially by international students, and students will often fail to note it down. You should also advise the class when you want certain points to be written down.
* Use an icebreaker in your class. An icebreaker is an activity designed to ease tension or relieve formality. It briefly takes attention away from the unit material and attempts to help everyone to feel relaxed and get to know each other. Some strategies for **ice breakers** include:  
  + *Name tags:* This is an ice-breaker that can be used at the start of the year. Although this may seem a little corny, not knowing names is a particular problem in classes with many students. Some students find it hard to remember other people’s names, to pronounce them or to know how to address others. This makes getting to know everyone harder.  
    The method is to ask each student to wear a name tag for the first few weeks, giving first name, second name, and the name they like to be called, perhaps spelt phonetically. Name tags can also be expanded to target other pieces of information to help build an inclusive classroom. For example, country of birth or most recent work experience could be written on the name tag and used as a discussion starter. Students might also like to personalise them in some way. You could also connect in some way to the discipline of study (eg favourite English author, or favourite mathematical theorem).   
      
    Another option is to have name plates for each student to put on the desk in front of them each week. This has the added advantage of a roll call as you know which plates are not collected. Extra information can be added by the students, as for the name tags. For online classes, students can post an introduction along with a picture which represents them in some way. Invite them to then comment on another student’s posting. (Adapted from Wood, McNeill & Harvey, 2008)
  + *People bingo:* Make a bingo board with descriptions (eg a person who has travelled more than 10km to class; a person who has a birthday in the same month as you etc.) and each person needs to put a name against each square by walking around the group and asking for the relevant information. The first to complete shouts ‘Bingo’.
  + *Introductions:* Either each student can introduce themselves briefly, or they introduce themselves to a partner or small group, and then another person introduces them to the class.
  + *Bringing in a map* and having people indicate where they were born/educated etc.
  + Speed dating is a technique to get to know people quickly. You have 3 minutes with each person to find out more about them, and then you move to the next person at the sound of a bell (or whatever). You can split the class into two and form two lines or a circle. Each person has to find three important pieces of information about each other person. You can follow this with asking people to recall all the names of those they talked to — there are many follow-up activities that could be used. The facilitator can be part of the *‘dating’*. The speed dating technique can also be used for content dialogue. Students can have 5 minutes with each person discussing the three most important points of the topic then move on. Different people will have different ideas. Because this is a one-to-one activity, it is useful at the beginning of the semester to help people build rapport. (Adapted from Wood, McNeill & Harvey, 2008).
  + Bring in a pile of free paint colour swatches from a hardware store. Students select one swatch and describe to the group what it says about them and/or what it reminds them of.

3 Creating a positive learning environment

*Creating expectations*

Most groups function better when there is a clear understanding of the ground rules and expectations. Problems with participation and behaviour may not be encountered if these expectations are established at the beginning and reinforced during the group activity.

What are reasonable expectations for university students in your tutorials and how would you go about establishing those with students?

A few suggestions …

* Let’s all contribute by speaking, and listening/encouraging others to speak.
* Let’s listen to each other and not interrupt.
* Let’s respect each other’s point of view.
* We’ll take risks and allow ourselves to be wrong at times.
* No put-downs (even as a joke).
* We will all be on time.
* Our phones will be on silent.
* All members of the group will do some preparation.
* All members of the group are given time to speak (no one person is to dominate).

*Questioning*

One way of encouraging participation is by asking questions effectively. We ask questions for a number of reasons:

* to test students’ knowledge;
* to check students’ understanding;
* to identify areas of weakness;
* to develop deep thinking;
* to motivate, encourage and stimulate, and
* to build students’ confidence

***Types of questions:*** Consider the usefulness of different types of questions and when it might be appropriate to ask them. Some examples are:

* leading - *Isn’t it true that all students want to succeed?*
* open - *Why might some students fail?*
* closed - *What is the name of the British Prime Minister?*

***Questions that encourage higher-order thinking:*** Consider the level of thinking you want students to employ in answering the question. Try to use questions at the appropriate level on Bloom’s taxonomy: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation

DO: Plan your questions ahead of time.  
Phrase questions clearly (unambiguously).  
Select convergent (closed) or divergent (open) questions according to desired goal/outcome.

DON’T: Ask more than one question at a time

***Responding to answers:*** Remember that your *response* to student answers is equally as important as the actual questions you ask. Don’t ask a question if you don’t want to hear the students’ answers.

DO: At the very least, acknowledge the student’s response. (eg, “Thank you for that comment.”

DON’T: always respond by *repeating* what the student has said. This only discourages group members from listening to each other. They will soon learn that you will repeat it!

*Dealing with difficult or challenging behaviour*

Difficult or challenging behaviour can be overtly hostile and aggressive, or more surreptitious and passive in nature. Challenging behaviour can be minimised through careful planning of *preventive* measures, such as setting expectations and involving students actively in the class.

Some tips for dealing with difficult behaviours:

* Stay calm. Don’t allow emotions to guide your response. Avoid being dragged into power struggles.
* Keep the issue about the behaviour, not the person.
* Use ‘assertive language’ – “I” statements. Eg “I would like everyone to hear that.” Rather than: “You are talking too much.”
* Allow students to ‘save face’ (don’t challenge them in front of their peers)
* The student needs to know that they are being *heard. Ask them privately:* “You seemed a bitdistracted in class today. Would you like to talk about it?”
* Ask yourself who owns the problem. Is there something that *you’re* doing (or *not* doing) as the teacher, that’s contributing to the problem?
* Remain solution-focused. While it is not your responsibility to solve students’ problems, you can support them in the problem-solving process. Use statements like the following:

***What would you like to see happen?*** *What can* ***you*** *do to help bring that about? What are your options?*

* Be self-protective:
  + Never allow yourself to be bullied. Seek support if necessary.
  + Keep documentary records of difficult situations or challenging behaviours.
  + If you do need to speak with a student privately, be visible. Keep the door open, or have a colleague join you.

Acknowledgement: Dr Sharon Thomas, TILT for the content of this section.

4 Delivering the tutorial

*Introducing the tutorial*

The introduction to a tutorial is very important in order to set the scene for the learning that is about to take place. How should you start the session?

* Include an overview of what you are going to cover in the session, and put this in the context of the overarching topic under discussion, and the whole unit.
* Include a brief motivation for why today's topic is important. You shouldn't see this as a waste of time. It is important for students to make the link between classes and topics and to know what will happen next. Show important information on slides/whiteboard as well as this helps visual learners.
* Include a brief review of what was covered in the last class, *e.g.* by giving a summary, or by posing questions that students answer.
* You might like to start with some kind of ‘hook’ to engage the students. Strategies for this might include:
  + a short video or sound byte
  + a case study
  + an article (or even a headline) from a recent newspaper, magazine or journal
  + a photograph or model
  + a letter or extract from an essay
  + a cartoon
  + a flash animation
  + a question and asking students to form a line in order of how strongly they agree or disagree (values continuum)

*Assessing prior learning*

To make sure that your tutorial is ‘hitting the mark’ for the students, assessment of prior learning, knowledge or experience can be helpful. If you determine that your students have good background knowledge then this means you can pace the tutorial so it is not repetitive. You might also be able to call on students to share some of this knowledge. Conversely, if students do not have the background you expect, you may need to alter the material you are going to cover, utilise strategies so that students share knowledge, or give students some ‘homework’ to get them up to speed for future tutorials.

Strategies that can be used to determine prior learning:

* brainstorm (individual, small group or class);
* short questions that target prior knowledge;
* asking student to provide a lay explanation of an important concept;
* drawing diagrams or graphic organisers;
* provide an example or explanation that is incorrect and asking students to explain why;
* asking students to write concepts they are unsure about or questions, on sticky notes;
* preconception/misconception check, or
* with online students you may like to get them to post to a blog or fill in a short survey.

*Encouraging collaborative and active learning*

From the UTAS Strategic Plan for Learning and Teaching 2012-2014:

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| Learning is a student‐centred and social concept. This recognises:   * the importance of student engagement in own learning; * the value of two‐way interactions between staff and students, and * the efficacy of experiential and participatory pedagogies. |

The following strategies have been drawn from the University of Queensland:

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| Think – pair – share | Each person considers the topic/question and writes down some ideas/answers. S/he joins with one other for discussion. This provides a good basis for wider discussion. |
| 'Buzz' groups | Working in small groups, people discuss an issue. Topics can include:   * how much they already know about a topic; * what they are not sure about, and * what they want the lecturer to cover next. |
| Round | Every person takes a turn to make a statement. Useful topics:   * One thing I need to know about . . . * Something that I learned today . . . * One important point (about the topic) . . . |
| Case studies | A ‘story’ or scenario is presented to the group (often, but not always, as a handout). Groups discuss the story or work together on questions. |
| Group discussion | Groups (up to 6 people) talk about a topic. A set of questions from the lecturer helps to structure the discussion and focus the group. The larger the group, the more difficult it is for everyone to participate actively. |
| Continuum | Everyone cooperates to form a line according to their capabilities/confidence/whatever the topic is. For example, the length of time their families have been in New Zealand, their ages, the number of times they have attended an interview, etc. |
| ‘Tell your partner’ | Pairs. Each person explains a topic/concept/ answer to someone else. The partner has to listen, and then ask questions. |
| Fishbowl | One group discusses a topic. The second group observes the discussion and each person records:   * a partner’s contributions (and gives individual feedback afterwards), or * the important parts of the discussion (may be identification of issues, applications, generalisations, etc., depending on the task instructions). |
| Peer evaluation | The class is divided into pairs. Partners exchange written work or observe each other’s oral presentation. They give each other feedback and work together to identify :   * what was good; * what needed improvement, and * how it could be improved.   They can focus on delivery and/or content. This activity works best if students already have knowledge on the topic. Giving them a checklist is also a good idea. |
| Role play | Groups/ pairs/ individuals ‘act out’ information on a specific topic, often in front of the class or group. If they lack confidence, they can work in pairs without ‘performing’ in front of the whole class. Set a time limit for each group. This activity can be used for formative or summative assessment. It is important to allow time for participants to de-role/debrief. |
| Presentations | Individuals or small groups find information on a topic, then prepare and deliver a short informative session to the wider group. |
| Panel | Several ‘experts’ are invited to the session and answer questions from the class. The experts may be from industry, other teachers, and/or students. They may each speak briefly before the question session. |
| Question and answer session | This is a useful activity to check students’ understanding. A time is set aside for a discussion/answer session. Questions may be submitted in writing at the previous session (good for shy students), or they may be oral. |
| Syndicates | Groups of students work together on a project(s) which entail(s) researching and presenting (written and/or oral) information. This is useful for focusing on group and cooperative skills while covering discipline content. |
| Brainstorming | Everyone thinks of as many different ideas as possible. All ideas are accepted and recorded without comment. The ideas are evaluated after a set time period or when inspiration ends. |
| Student:teacher role swap | The facilitator asks students to write their ideas/information on the white board and then explain them. S/he places several white board pens on the desk and sits with class members. (Sometimes students will be shy, especially at first, and the facilitator may need to sit for a while. It’s a good idea to offer a small reward – Minties or other wrapped sweets work well!) |
| Information transfer | This is a paired activity. Partners ask each other questions and give answers to fill gaps on their worksheets. (Each worksheet has different gaps.) |
| Matching | This activity is one way to divide a large group into pairs. Members of the group are given cards which contain either a title or a definition. They have to find the person with the complementary card. In finding their partners, they come across a range of definitions and have to think about the topic. Content can be simple or complex depending on people’s abilities. The pairs then work together on an exercise/problem related to their title and definition. Reporting back afterwards widens the learning. |
| Withdrawal | While the group works together or alone on set work, the lecturer spends time with individual students or small groups. The individual assistance can be rostered through the course so that everyone gets a turn, or it can focus on people who need extra help. |
| Mindmaps | A topic is written on the board (or on butcher’s paper). The class/group suggests and organises ideas and information, presenting them visually, often in clusters. Students often enjoy writing on the board (bring several whiteboard pens); where numbers are large, this activity is better carried out in groups with a display of the results at the end. |
| Organising information | Information items are provided out of sequence. Students work (in pairs or small groups) to arrange them in order. The results can then be reported by each group and/or discussed by the wider group. The information can be given to students on a single worksheet or already cut into pieces for them to arrange in order. |
| Demonstrations | The teacher shows students how to do something, or uses equipment to explain theory/principles. This activity can also be presented by a student or group. Seeing something real helps students to remember more clearly. |
| Experiments | The teacher or the students carry out a practical activity to verify or refute a principle. |
| 1 – 2  –  4  –  more (pyramid) | Each person writes brief notes about the topic and then compares them with a partner. Each pair discusses its combined list with another couple. This provides a good basis for discussion in the wider group. It is a good idea to limit the ‘1 – 2 – 4’ stages, eg 2 minutes or so for individual and for paired work, 5 minutes for the ‘4’ stage. |
| Show of hands | This quick check is useful for gaining a rough idea of how many people are confident about a topic. It is worth remembering that confidence is not always the same as understanding. This activity is a good ‘energiser’. It is particularly useful:   * at the beginning of a session to focus attention, or * when the group has been sitting still for some time. |
| ‘Ignorance’ | Before the class begins, students consider what they would like to know by the end of the session. They write down some questions - five is a good number to aim for. Some students might like to share their questions, which can be recorded on the board. The students write more questions at the end of the session. These questions are likely to be different from the earlier ones; they should involve a higher level of thinking; there may well be more of them, and they can be a useful basis for further private study. |

Source: [**http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/largeclasses/**](http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/largeclasses/)**,** Created by AUT User Centre for Educational and Professional Development)

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| Inkshedding | First you need a question to pose to the students. You can either develop a question for the day, or a series of them to use over a few weeks. Ask the students to spend 5 minutes writing down their thoughts on the question. That writing should be what language teachers call ‘freewriting’, that is, the student writes whatever comes to mind, without anyone making judgments about it or corrections to it. (Make this clear to students when you introduce the activity.) Freewriting helps generate thoughts and ideas, so it’s an excellent starting place for discussions. The students finish their 5 minutes of freewriting and then pass their notebook to another student. Everyone reads the notebook in front of them and then spends another 5 minutes freewriting in response to the first student’s thoughts. That process continues through several iterations, until —after 20 or 25 minutes — the students have engaged in an extended dialogue with each other, all on paper, and are ready to start talking about their ideas out loud. |
| Controversy | Method 1: Ask each group for 5 statements of evidence or argument for their case. Write these statements on the board. If a class comes too quickly to agreement on a complex issue, play devil’s advocate to create a controversy. When this is complete, the groups break off again to come up with 5 statements of rebuttal of the other team’s arguments. At the end ask if any students have changed their minds, and why.  Method 2: You act as a moderator, asking students from one group, then the other, to support their position. At set intervals, say 15 minutes, students are allowed to change groups if they have changed their minds. Optionally, the students can then be asked to argue for the other side. At the end, the moderator summarises the main points for and against. By creating a controversy and forcing interaction, these methods encourage all students to participate. |
| Jigsaw method  (or Expert groups) | This is a collaborative learning method which can help students to make meaning from written material. Students work in groups, with each group having a separate piece of information. They become the experts in that area. The students then split up and recombine in groups where only one person has expertise in each area and they then share their information.  **Method** (For multiples of 5 participants)   * Divide students into small groups — around 5 people in each group depending on your class size. For example, 5 groups of 5 would be good. * Divide the information into 5 segments. (This is why it is good to have the same number of students in each group as the number of groups.) For example, with accounting students you could use different parts of a report for each group (as might happen in the workplace), or you could use different articles on the same topic. * Give each member of the group a different segment of information and allow time to read it but not discuss it at this stage. This information, or article, could be given in the previous class. * Rearrange the groups so that all those with the same information become an expert group on their own segment. Give students in these expert groups time to discuss the main points of their segment and to rehearse how they would present it to non-experts. * Now comes the fun part! The students from each expert group go back to their original group which now contains an expert on each piece of information. * Each student presents her or his segment to the group. Encourage others in the group to ask questions for clarification. |

Reference: Wood, McNeill & Harvey, 2008.

*Covering the material*

The activities you use, and the order in which you do activities, or introduce material is very important for learning. Once you decide on the activities, make a note to check that each leads from another in a way that will be logical to the student. Moving from easier to more demanding tasks can build confidence; similarly, doing tasks that will make students pose new questions – that will then be facilitated by your planned tasks - is also very effective.You should also make a note that the activities you have planned match your intended learning outcomes of the tutorial session.

Simply getting through a set amount of material should not be the major aim of your class. The aim should be that your students **understand** the material. The timing of your class presentation is very important as it can have a deep impact on your students' learning and your own stress levels. You can gauge your students' response to your delivery by watching them and asking questions as you go along. An increase in noise level could indicate that you are losing their attention. In your planning you might like to consider which is the essential material – and what could be covered if time permits. Allocating a time you would like to spend on each activity and noting this on you lesson plan is a good way of gauging how you are progressing, and it allows you to adjust before the end of the session.

Disruptions can occur, such as fire alarms, technical equipment failure or power loss. You should be aware of the time constraints and be prepared to make a clear decision about material that you don't have time to cover properly. It is better to delay the presentation of material, or post this online, than to try to rush through.

Each group of students is different, within the same semester if you are teaching several classes, but also from one unit offering to the next. This means that your approaches to teaching a topic might need to be adjusted depending on your students' existing skills.

**If a student does not understand a particular concept, use a *different* approach to explaining it.** Don't repeat the same explanation several times as this may lead to frustration in you and your students. Try to find out why they don't understand, e.g. by asking which steps they did not understand, or by asking them to explain the steps to you. In this way, you will be able to identify gaps in their knowledge, and you can target those directly. If you find that many students have the same difficulty, then you will need to adjust your teaching. Podcasts or videos can save repetition of the explanation.

Quite often, you will have a class with a diverse range of skills, particularly in first year units. You will need to find a balance between explaining in too little or too much detail. You should be offering additional help to those students who are struggling, asking them to attend lecturer consultation hours, or referring them to appropriate learning support. You could also offer extension material to the brightest or most eager students.

5 Assessing learning and providing feedback in a tutorial

Tutorials are excellent opportunities to evaluate student learning. This evaluation can assist staff in planning for future teaching and also give students valuable feedback that will inform their future learning.

Not all feedback will be formal. Some will be in response to student presentation and answers to questions; some will be directed at the whole group, for example, pointing out common errors in assignments. Other feedback may come from peers, or self assessment against schema could be used in some cases. It is important to ensure that students recognise all these forms as **feedback on their learning** – and that they are also made aware of how this feedback can feed forward into their future learning or assessment tasks.

Angelo and Cross have published a resource on Classroom Assessment Techniques(Angelo, T.A. & Cross, P.K. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass). They suggest that these can provide useful, short term feedback about learning and teaching with a much lower investment of time than formal tests or other traditional assessments. This approach also models the belief that learning is a formative process in which feedback, and responding to feedback, are important. By using these techniques in classrooms, student can get immediate feedback on their learning and use this to monitor their progress and their study skills. Skilfully used they can create a very positive learning environment in classrooms. The following strategies have been sourced from a summary found at:

<http://www.ntlf.com/html/lib/bib/assess.htm>.

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| ***Name:*** | ***Description:*** | ***What to do with the data:*** | ***Time required:*** |
| **Minute paper** | During the last few minutes of the class period, ask students to answer on a half-sheet of paper: "What is the most important point you learned today?"; and, "What point remains least clear to you?". The purpose is to elicit data about students' comprehension of a particular class session. | Review responses and note any useful comments. During the next class, emphasise the issues illuminated by your students' comments. | Prep: Low In class: Low Analysis: Low |
| **Chain Notes** | Students pass around an envelope on which the teacher has written one question about the class. When the envelope reaches a student he/she spends a moment to respond to the question and then places the response in the envelope. | Go through the student responses and determine the best criteria for categorising the data with the goal of detecting response patterns. Discussing the patterns of responses with students can lead to better teaching and learning. | Prep: Low In class: Low Analysis: Low |
| **Memory matrix** | Students fill in cells of a two-dimensional diagram for which the instructor has provided labels. For example, in a music course, labels might consist of periods (Baroque, Classical), or by countries (Germany, France, Britain). Students enter composers in cells to demonstrate their ability to remember and classify key concepts. | Tally the numbers of correct and incorrect responses in each cell. Analyse differences both between and among the cells. Look for patterns among the incorrect responses and decide what might be the cause(s). | Prep: Med In class: Med Analysis: Med |
| **Directed paraphrasing** | Ask students to write a layman’s "translation" of something they have just learned (geared to a specified individual or audience) to assess their ability to comprehend and transfer concepts. | Categorize student responses according to characteristics you feel are important. Analyse the responses both within and across categories, noting ways you could address student needs. | Prep: Low In class: Med Analysis: Med |
| **One-sentence summary** | Students summarize knowledge of a topic by constructing a single sentence that answers the questions "Who does what to whom, when, where, how, and why?" The purpose is to require students to select only the defining features of an idea. | Evaluate the quality of each summary quickly and holistically. Note whether students have identified the essential concepts of the class topic and their interrelationships. Share your observations with your students. | Prep: Low In class: Med Analysis: Med |
| **Application cards** | After teaching about an important theory, principle or procedure, ask students to write down at least one real-world application for what they have just learned to determine how well they can transfer their learning. | Quickly read once through the applications and categorize them according to their quality. Pick out a broad range of examples and present them to the class. | Prep: Low In class: Low Analysis: Med |
| **Student-generated test questions** | Allow students to write test questions and model answers for specified topics, in a format consistent with course exams. This will give students the opportunity to evaluate the course topics, reflect on what they understand, and what are good test items. | Make a rough tally of the questions your students propose and the topics that they cover. Evaluate the questions and use the good ones as prompts for discussion. You may also want to revise the questions and use them on the upcoming exam. | Prep: Med\* In class: High Analysis: High  (Could be homework)  \*Might need a rubric to guide students. |

*Principles for feedback*

When giving feedback to students there are some principles that are useful to follow:

* Start with the positive feedback.
* Feedback that is concerned with how work can be improved should be ‘sandwiched’ between two groups of positive feedback.
* Focus on only 2 or 3 points for students to work on – these should be related to the assessment criteria.
* Provide concrete suggestions about how to improve.
* Give feedback that is succinct and written in easy to understand language.
* Make sure it is understood. When possible, ask the student to describe the feedback in their own words.

6 Inclusive practice in tutorials

“Our classrooms are microcosms of the diverse society in which we live. The aim of inclusive teaching is not to dilute standards or change content, but to adopt a teaching style that accommodates a diversity of abilities, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles and needs. This approach acknowledges that students with disability may learn differently, but are no less academically capable”(http://www.adcet.edu.au/Cats/Teaching\_and\_Assessment.chpx)

Good teaching practice is inclusive. The Creating Accessible Teaching and Support (CATS) website has many excellent resources to support inclusive teaching practice. A helpful resource is ‘Inclusive Practice in 5’ a practical guide to help teaching staff: <http://www.adcet.edu.au/Cats/CATSuite/Inclusive_Practice_in_5.chpx>.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Be Approachable** | Introduce yourself to students in a way that connects them to you and your choice to be a lecturer/staff member in this field. |
| At the first lecture your practice, your expectations and your availability as well as your unit. Reduce the barriers between you and your students to develop rapport. |
| Don't underestimate the power of 'just listening’. |
| **Be  Proactive** | See students with disability early, and directly, when possible. |
| Provide your unit outlines early so they can be accessed by students before semester starts. |
| Be aware of the support services that are available in your university and how they may be accessed. |
| Provide an orientation to laboratory/workshop/tutorials/technology before students begin, to help reduce anxiety. |
| When designing your unit, think creatively about teaching and learning strategies that might complement the needs and learning styles of a diversity of students. |
| **Be  Flexible** | Consider, and provide, alternatives to the 'common' delivery methods and assessments within your course (ensuring they align to the learning outcomes). |
| Include a range of assessment tasks and consider introducing a choice where appropriate. |
| Be open to ideas that are proposed by students themselves who may have challenges in addressing assessment criteria because of their conditions. |
| **Be  Planned** | Have your unit materials developed ahead of semester so students who require extra time to complete the readings can access them early. |
| Ensure your unit materials are provided in electronic formats appropriate for assistive technology (for example screen readers). |
| Consider the individual needs of students when assigning students to groups. |
| Ensure you follow correct 'teaching and learning' policies about clearly articulating learning objectives/inherent requirements/assessment activities in all course materials. |
| **Be  Human** | It's OK to acknowledge your limitations as a 'human being'. |
| It is very worthwhile to make even the smallest of steps to becoming more inclusive, or towards helping just one student -. |

7 Evaluating your tutorial

### How do we know that our teaching is promoting student achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

“It is important that we evaluate our teaching as we progress through a unit to ensure that our teaching is ‘hitting the mark': achieving the targeted student learning outcomes for the interaction. Evaluating our teaching enables us to respond to experience and student characteristics and preferences, to adjust the approach for future courses, and to adjust our approach for the balance of the unit. Evaluating our teaching in a formal, recorded way also enables us to demonstrate externally teaching competence. The collection and management of feedback on our teaching is an important dimension of a professional teaching portfolio”. (Brown, 2011, Collecting evidence about your teaching, Professional Development Unit for Teachers in the Quantitative Disciplines). The following strategies have been adapted from the Unit outlined above.

Self Reflection:

* Spend a few minutes noting down the things that you take notice of when you are teaching. These may be to do with what the students do (or don't do), about timing and sequencing, about your own performance as a teacher, about the content etc. It may be helpful to recall a situation when you think your teaching went very well and perhaps another where you think your teaching did not work so well. (How did you know?)
* Annotate tutorial plans (for example, note if you needed to add information or supplementary examples, when you thought students didn't understand or were lacking prior knowledge, additional examples that were raised in class, suggested changes in timing or sequencing of material).
* Create and use a standard form for self assessment at the end of each lecture or tutorial, with questions assessing the level of student engagement, the pace through the materials, the demonstrated student learning, and the achievement of outcomes. Store and reflect on these self-assessment pieces at the end of the unit. This can be done as an online survey response which then collects and analyses the responses for trends. (See appendix for an example.)
* Watch other teachers, either by observation in classes or watching recordings (and complete a structured assessment and analysis instrument).
* Think about how you would teach something if you could not use previous methods, and wanted to engage the students.

Some specific question you might like to use are:

* How was diversity of students managed?
* Did I ask a variety of questions?
* What was the level of student engagement?
* Do I have high expectations of my students?
* Were the examples used relevant to my students?
* Did I deliver praise and feedback when relevant?

Collecting evidence from students:

If you are including the collaborative learning strategies and the classroom assessment techniques outlined in the previous sections, you will have a great deal of information about student learning. You might like to employ some of these strategies at the end of a session eg:

* Muddiest Point: Ask students to write down what idea/concept/technique has been the least clear to them. You can then consider whether you then provide a list of FAQs based on the identified questions or issues by students.
* Student response systems (‘clickers')
* Share examples of work as they are working through problems. Consider discussion of sharing the cognitive processes involved and explaining the thinking and the problem solving approach.
* Survey students, asking them about issues that are problematic and their preferences for learning and teaching.
* Note the numbers of students attending tutorials.
* Work through a problem in groups or on a white board, with students making suggestions of alternative strategies.
* Students work through example questions, circling or annotating their solutions to denote any areas of problem.
* Ask students to report back on key points from lectures.
* Ask students to write anonymously on a slip of paper at the beginning of a tutorial any things that they are confused by or are having trouble with which can then inform the conduct of the tutorial. An alternative is that this has to be emailed or posted on a discussion board in advance of the class which enables the teacher to consider the material in the course of preparing the lesson. This technique can also be used in relation to getting feedback on various aspects of the tutorial experience including pace, clarity, utility etc.
* Ask students to formulate questions about the material for others to answer.
* Measure and record the number of students who can complete target formative assessment tasks in the tutorial group at the beginning and end of the tutorial or series of classes.
* Ask for concepts that are not clear, or not yet understood, to be written on sticky notes.
* Ask for two things that have been learnt to be written on sticky notes.
* A 3:2:1 (e.g. Three things I learnt, two things I already knew, one question I have)
* Ask students to select three letters from the tiles from a Scrabble set. Get them to explain a key learning point that starts with each of the letters they have chosen.

Collecting evidence from peers:

You could invite a peer to sit in on a tutorialand give you feedback on something specific. The questions in the self assessment may be helpful for this purpose. More information on peer review can be found in the reference section, or by contacting TILT.

8 References and further reading

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Students: UTAS Cross-Cultural Support Service has resources to assist you in supporting CALD students in your classes. Please see: <http://www.utas.edu.au/students/cross-cultural-support>

The Monash University web site on Inclusive Teaching: <http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/inclusivity/>

Association for Psychological Science (2006). [*Evaluating and improving your teaching*](http://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/getArticle.cfm?id=1974), Available from: <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/getArticle.cfm?id=1974>

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Bressoud, D. M. (n.d.). *The one-minute paper.* Retrieved February 21, 2011 from <http://www.maa.org/saum/maanotes49/87.html>

Bell, M. (2005). *Peer observation partnerships in higher education.* Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia.

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The CATS Suite of Resources: <http://www.adcet.edu.au/Cats/CATSuite.chpx>

Thompson, S., & Kwitko, L. (2007). *Teaching planning in the culturally inclusive classroom: guidelines for educators.* Available at: <http://www.une.edu.au/ANZAPS/resources/guidelines.htm>

University of the Sunshine Coast. *Online tutorial feedback form.* Available from: <http://www.usc.edu.au/University/Library/Services/Forms/Feedback.htm>

Wood, L., Bloom, W., Bower, M., Brown, N., Donovan, D., Joshi, N., Loch, B., Skalicky, J., & Vu, T. (2011). AustMS Introductory Unit for teachers in the Mathematical Sciences, ALTC project. Available at: <https://www.austms.org.au/Professional+Development+Unit>

Wood, L., McNeill, M., & Harvey, M. (2008). *How to lead discussions: Learning through engagement*. Macquarie University. Available at: <http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/pdfs/FBE_Lead_Discussions.pdf>

Appendix

**1SAMPLE TUTORIAL PLAN PROFORMA**

|  |
| --- |
| Name: Date: |
| Unit: Class: |
| Topic: |
| Tutorial begins: Tutorial ends: No. of students: |

|  |
| --- |
| Prior learning: |
| Outcomes for this tutorial:  *What are the key concepts, ideas or theories?* |
| Links to previous tutorial: |
| Assessment of learning: |
| Are there students with special needs who need to be catered for? If so how? |
| Equipment/resources required: |
| Safety: |
| Links to next tutorial & follow-up activities: |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time: | Sequence: | Teaching strategies: | Student activities: |
|  | Introduction  *personal introduction*  *administrivia*  *ice breaker(s)*  *a “hook”* |  |  |
|  | Content |  |  |
|  | Conclusion |  |  |

***Appendix***

**2 Lessons outcomes:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Students will: | understand . . .  develop . . .  appreciate . . .  gain knowledge of . . .  compare . . .  analyse . . . |

***Appendix***

**3 Evaluation:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation (Aspects you are targeting improvement add or substitute your own)** | Strongly  Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| * T & L strategies were effectively implemented. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * I was able to generate a sense of purpose. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * A high level of student participation was achieved. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * My questioning was clear, concise, varied and logically sequenced. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * Students were engaged and self disciplined. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * Instructions were clear and easily understood by students. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * I recognised and catered for individual differences. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * I established and maintained and effective learning environment. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * My pace through the materials was appropriate for the group and for the content. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * Student learning was demonstrated. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * I delivered genuine praise and positive feedback when relevant. | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ |
| * I achieved the outcomes for this tutorial.   What were the most effective elements of the tutorial? Why? | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| What were the least effective elements of the tutorial? Why? | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| If I were to repeat the tutorial what would I change? How could I improve? | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |