

“Teaching Nuts and Bolts”
AALS Workshop for New Law Teachers 2003
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Purpose of this part of the session is to explore:

- Creating an effective teaching and learning environment
- Resources for continued professional development as a teacher

Components of an Effective Teaching and Learning Environment

(Gerald F. Hess, *Heads and Hearts: The Teaching and Learning Environment in Law School*, 52 J. Legal Educ. 75 (2002).)

Respect

- Mutual respect – the most fundamental element
- The three Rs
- How to
 - Learn about students – names, goals, experiences
 - Let students get to know you
 - Model respect in and out of the classroom

Expectations

- Clear, realistic, high expectations of all students
- Velvet Hammer
- How to
 - Clearly articulate expectations for course and each class (content, skills, values)
 - Provide models of excellent student work
 - Model high expectations in your own performance

Support

- Lowman’s Mastering the Techniques of Teaching – intellectual excitement and interpersonal rapport – concerned, helpful, caring, encouraging, available
- Student-faculty contact influences student aspirations, satisfaction, commitment
- How to
 - Welcome student contact in office and via email
 - Attend student events
 - Mentor students

Collaboration

- Cooperative, small group learning benefits
 - Deep understanding
 - Appreciation of other perspectives
 - Foster skills (problem solving, critical thinking)
- Collaborative course design benefits

- Increase student commitment
 - Enhance student learning and attitudes
- How to
 - Small group
 - Three-minute discussions in class
 - Drafting outside of class
 - Design
 - Student mid-semester feedback on teaching/learning methods
 - Student Advisory Group (Gerald F. Hess, *Student Involvement in Improving Law Teaching and Learning*, 67 UMKC L. Rev. 343 (1998).)

Inclusion

- Students arrive with different backgrounds, experiences, goals, perspectives
- Student learning styles vary
- How to teach the full range of students = Variety
 - Include material that reflects diverse perspectives
 - Use a variety of teaching/learning activities

Engagement

- Active listening by the teacher
- Active learning by the students (higher level thinking, content and skill mastery, student motivation)
- How to
 - Active listening – silence, responding directly, checking in with students
 - Active learning methods – Socratic questioning, discussion, writing, role-playing, student presentations, visuals, CALI, course website, real-life

Delight

- Teachers' enthusiasm and passion is critical to effective teaching
- Students' attitudes reflect teacher's attitudes
- How to
 - What you love about this course
 - Humor

Feedback

- Importance of formative feedback for student learning
- Effective feedback – specific, corrective, positive, and timely
- Angelo and Cross, *Classroom Assessment Techniques* – teachers gather feedback from students about their learning
- How to
 - Feedback to students: self, peers, individual (written, oral, in class), group (quizzes, practice exams)
 - Classroom Assessment – feedback to teachers
 - Mid-semester feedback form
 - Minute paper

Continued Development as Teachers

Bibliographies of Articles:

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Newsletter:

The Law Teacher, Gerald F. Hess, Gail Hammer, and Dan Webster editors, Institute for Law School Teaching, Gonzaga University School of Law

Articles (just a few)

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- Gary L. Blasi, *What Lawyers Know: Lawyering Expertise, Cognitive Science, and the Functions of Theory*, 45 J. LEGAL EDUC. 313 (1995).
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- Roger Cramton, *Beyond The Ordinary Religion*, 37 J. LEGAL EDUC. 509 (1987).
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- Symposium, *Seven Principles of Good Practice in Legal Education*, 49 J. LEGAL EDUC. (1999).
- Kent D. Syverud, *Taking Students Seriously: A Guide for New Law Teachers*, 42 J. LEGAL EDUC. 247 (1993).

Books – Legal Education

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- GREG MUNRO, OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FOR LAW SCHOOLS, Institute for Law School Teaching (2000).
- GERALD HESS & STEVE FRIEDLAND, TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING LAW, Carolina Academic Press (1999).
- CORINNE COOPER, GETTING GRAPHIC 2, Institute for Law School Teaching (1994).

Books – Higher Education

- ANGELO, THOMAS A. and K. PATRICIA CROSS. CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES: A HANDBOOK FOR COLLEGE TEACHERS (Jossey-Bass, 2nd ed. 1993).
- BLIGH, DONALD, WHAT'S THE USE OF LECTURE (Jossey-Bass, 2000).
- BONWELL, CHARLES C. and JAMES A. EISON. ACTIVE LEARNING: CREATING EXCITEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1. (The George Washington University, 1991).
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- MARYELEN WEIMER, LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING (Jossey-Bass, 2002).

Videotapes

- Gerald Hess, Paula Lustbader, Laurie Zimet, “Principles to Enhance Legal Education,” Institute for Law School Teaching (2001).
- Gerald Hess, Paula Lustbader, Laurie Zimet, “Teach to the Whole Class: Barriers and Pathways to Learning,” Institute for Law School Teaching (1997).
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Conferences

- Association of American Law Schools, <http://www.aals.org>
- Institute for Law School Teaching, <http://law.gonzaga.edu/ilst/ilst.htm>
- Legal Writing Institute, <http://www.lwionline.org>
- Society of American Law Teachers, <http://www.saltlaw.org>

Reflection, Feedback, and Evaluation

Reflection on your own teaching

- After each class make comments in your class notes about what worked, what didn't, ideas for the future
- Keep a teaching journal to record ideas, plan instruction, analyze problems, work through strong emotions, engage in critical reflection (Gerald F. Hess, *Learning to Think Like a Teacher: Reflective Journals for Legal Educators*, 38 GONZ. L. REV. (2003)).

Peer Review

- Evaluative. Investigate the culture and practice of your school. How often will your classes be reviewed? Will you receive notice of the review?
- Formative. Pair with a trusted colleague. Visit each other's classes. Meet in advance to discuss the specific feedback you want your colleague to gather in your class.

Student Evaluations

- Evaluative. Keep the end-of-the-term evaluation in perspective. No teacher connects with all of the students all of the time. Look for trends in the comments; do not overemphasize a single student's comments. Identify one or two changes you can make the next time you teach the course. Be happy about the positive comments.
- Formative. Have students complete a mid-semester evaluation with three simple questions, such as: What teaching/learning methods are working best for you? What teaching/learning methods are working least for you? What suggestions do you have to improve your learning? Get back to students with a summary of their comments and implement at least one suggestion.