

## SECTION 1: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES **\*\*PRACTICE OBSERVATION\*\***

The classroom, whether it be on campus or virtual, draws students from different backgrounds with various experiences and abilities. Using a variety of instructional strategies increases student engagement, critical thinking, connections to learning outcomes, and student success for *all* learners. Being an effective teacher requires the implementation of creative and innovative teaching strategies - it takes practice to determine teaching strategies that work best for course learning outcomes, your students, and your teaching style.

The following is a list of evidence-based practices from the [Instructional Strategies](#) domain of the [Teaching Effectiveness Framework](#). Look for some of these practices while observing your colleagues.



### ACTIVE LEARNING

- Grab students' attention during the first five minutes of class; finish strong in the last five minutes
- Use Think Pair Share to engage students break up lecture, or check for student understanding
- Incorporate Classroom Assessment Techniques for individual, partner, or group processing
- Engage students in Community Engaged Learning that meets academic and community needs
- Support deep understanding and retention of concepts with peer-to-peer instruction
- Use discussion protocols for an equitable discussion experience
- Support content retention and critical thinking with Writing Across the Curriculum activities
- Promote deep learning and problem solving with case studies
- Host asynchronous online discussions in the Canvas LMS
- Use instructional strategies that have a proven effect size on student learning:
  - Use the Jigsaw Method for peer learning
  - Give students the opportunity to be the expert with Reciprocal Teaching (peer-to-peer instruction)
  - Reverse the traditional order of teaching with Inductive Teaching
  - Provide graphic organizers to students to support student understanding
  - Provide support, clarity, and structure to students with scaffolding
  - Prime students for learning by activating prior knowledge
  - Help students organize knowledge with Concept Maps (student directions)
  - Add structure to Cooperative Learning for successful groupwork
  - Enhance critical thinking with Problem Solving Teaching or Problem-based Learning



### LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

- Use accessible slide presentations, documents, videos, and other course materials
- Provide students with the ATRC Quick Start Guides to share the free assistive technology tools available at CSU
- Consider learning technologies that enhance student engagement. Popular apps include: Kahoot, Flippity, Quizlet, Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, iClickers
- Ensure your Canvas classroom materials are accessible: Run the UDOIT for Canvas tool to check your course for accessibility compliance; share ReadSpeaker for Canvas tool with students
- Use Canvas, Echo360, or Microsoft Teams to record videos; limit instructional videos to less than 15 minutes
- Work with Classroom Support Services to learn how to use classroom technology as well as report classroom technology problems
- Integrate technological and physical manipulatives into class sessions



### SCIENCE OF LEARNING

- Intentionally embed Science of Learning practices into your instruction: Predicting, Interleaving, Connecting, Practicing
- Align in-class activities and assignments with the level of thinking you want from students
- Guide students in the three phases of learning (surface, deep, and transfer) to retain, understand, and then apply knowledge to a new context
- Avoid cognitive overload for students and allow time for metacognition
- Incorporate elaboration, spacing, and frequent quizzing/testing

### PLEASE NOTE

The goal of Teaching Squares is for the observer to learn/gain as much, if not more, than the person being observed. Not all of these practices will be observable in one class session, 1-week or 1-module timeframe.



**CANVAS OBSERVATIONS:** You may have been added to the Canvas course as a *Designer*. In this role you will not be able to view student grades, but this role does allow you to make changes to the course. **Please be careful as you navigate through the course, so you don't make accidental edits.** Be sure to maintain the confidentiality of the instructor and all students and their work. Limit your observation to the desired LMS module/week (typically 50-60 mins).

## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND INFORMATION **\*\*PRACTICE OBSERVATION\*\***

To be filled out by the **instructor being observed**

### BASIC DATA

Instructor Name: *Anonymous Instructor*

Course Number & Name: *Intro Biology for non-majors*

Course Location (or Canvas Shell URL): *Large classroom setting*

Observation Period (date or module): *Spring 2020*

Number of Students Enrolled in Class: *275*

### PLANNING FOR THE OBSERVATION

Briefly describe any of the *Instructional Strategies* you incorporated into the observation dates/week. Refer to the list on page 1 of this document for ideas.

#### **Instructional Strategy 1: Online response system**

Reason for using this strategy: *I've been using i-clickers in the past but students are now using the phone version to respond instead so this is not a big change for me. This has been a way for me to incorporate active learning with 250+ students in my section.*

#### **Instructional Strategy 2: Folders with names and group numbers**

Reason for using this strategy: *Rather than give students the correct answer via the response question, whenever there is a "split" in answers, I ask students to talk to classmates in their group and "convince" them that their answer is correct.*

#### **Instructional Strategy 3: Calling on group numbers to share their thinking with me and classmates**

Reason for using this strategy: *Instead of cold calling, I call on a group to share their thoughts. This way, a single student doesn't feel too much pressure in sharing their own answer in front of so many peers.*

Briefly respond to the following questions related to the use of *Instructional Strategies* in your course.

- Is there anything specific, a goal or issue you have been working on, that you would like the observer to pay attention to?  
*Students still don't seem to be asking me question when I know they have questions.*
- Is there anything else (not included above) you would like observed? (student use of phones, student engagement overall, late arrivals, early departures, etc.)  
*I have been using the group/folder strategy for 3 semesters. Is it working? Does it seem like students are generally engaged?*
- Is there anything else you would like the observer to know before observing your class?  
*I chose Instructional Strategies for this observation, but I also feel that I am working on Feedback & Assessment since I am also giving students feedback in real time during the class.*

## SECTION 3: OBSERVATION NOTES

## **\*\*PRACTICE OBSERVATION\*\***

To be filled out by the **instructor completing the observation**

### *FEEDBACK STARTER IDEAS*

- I really liked how you...
- This works well because....
- Have you considered...
- I wonder if...

## OBSERVATION FEEDBACK

### BEGINNING THE CLASS/MODULE

- Describe how the instructor begins the class session or module.
- Does it appear that they are using a specific active learning or science of learning strategy (see page 1)? If so, describe the strategy(ies).
- Describe how students respond.
- Do you have any suggestions that might refine or enhance the beginning of the class/module?

### TEACHING THE CLASS/MODULE

#### *Active Learning or Science of Learning Strategies*

- What worked well in teaching the class? Was a specific strategy used? (See page 1)
- What strategies might be integrated or refined to enhance instruction or student engagement? (See page 1)

#### *Learning Technology*

- What worked well with any visual presentation or technology. (PowerPoint, i-clickers, demonstrations, etc.).
- What strategies might be integrated or refined to enhance visual presentation or technology use?

### WRAPPING UP THE CLASS/MODULE

- Describe how the instructor closes the class session or the module.
- Does it appear that they are using a specific active learning or science of learning strategy (see page 1)? If so, describe the strategy(ies).
- Describe how students respond.
- Do you have any suggestions that might refine or enhance the closing of the class/module?



## SECTION 4: OBSERVER REFLECTION

## **\*\*PRACTICE OBSERVATION\*\***

To be filled out by the **instructor completing the observation**

THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR MY OWN TEACHING

