

Faculty Seminar on Remote Communication-Intensive Teaching

Asynchronous Day 3

Day 3 Overview

RESPONDING PRODUCTIVELY – AND TIME-EFFICIENTLY – TO STUDENT WORK AND MEANINGFULLY SUPPORTING EQUITY

- What is formative feedback and why is it so important in online teaching?
- How can we provide formative feedback meaningfully and time-efficiently in our remote teaching?
- Other than through feedback, how can we facilitate meaningful and transformative interaction – especially what's called "instructor presence" – in remote courses?

Frequent and Transparent Feedback

WHY IS IT OF HEIGHTENED IMPORTANCE IN ONLINE TEACHING?

- Overwhelming scholarly consensus
- Drastically fewer opportunities to pick up information independently
- Feedback is a key motivator and form of social connection

Two Kinds of Feedback

WHAT KIND OF FEEDBACK IS ESPECIALLY USEFUL IN ONLINE TEACHING?

Summative Feedback: how did student do in relation to performance standard?

Examples:

- exam grade
- rubric score on paper final draft

Formative Feedback: guides student to deepen skills in-progress

Examples:

- questions responding to early draft
- note one strength and one area for improvement in response to a problem set
- note indicating what page of the textbook to review
- Peer review

Formative Feedback

WHY EMPHASIZE FORMATIVE FEEDBACK?

- Frequent, minimal formative feedback meaningfully situates students
- Reduces summative feedback grading load
- Most powerful time for in-depth feedback
- For more, see our Very Short Guide on Formative and Summative Feedback: <https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/blsci/files/2019/08/27-Formative-and-Summative-Feedback.pdf>

Formative Feedback

A PAUSE FOR INDEPENDENT REFLECTION

Pause the video and take some notes. Thinking about your own feedback strategies and practices:

- What formative feedback practices do you use? When in the semester do you use them?
- What summative feedback practices do you use? When in the semester do you use them?
- Are there opportunities in your course to increase emphasis on formative feedback? Where and how?

Core Principles for Feedback in Online Courses

THE LITERATURE SURFACES THESE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Be frequent and timely.
- Be transparent
- Relay feedback through multiple modalities
- Foster human connection

Be Frequent and Timely

BUT ALSO EFFICIENT

- Feedback doesn't always have to come from you (e.g. peer review, self-assessments)
- Share whole-class trends instead of crafting individual responses
- Share strong student work and explain why it is a model
- Create self-assessment checklists for strategic moments in the course to help students determine independently that they're on track
- Use ungraded check-for-understanding quizzes with automated responses through your LMS
- Model the way you use your rubric so that peer review is more productive
- Plan due dates around your availability for responding to questions

Be Transparent

TO ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

- **Create a “Feedback and Assessment Plan”** (e.g. chart planned points of feedback and assessment, including graded and ungraded as well as peer feedback and self-assessment)
- **Tell students what to expect from you and when** (e.g. “I will respond with strength and areas for improvement only on the low-stakes assignment that precedes each high-stakes one; otherwise I will share-out whole class patterns using the rubric....”)
- **Tell students when they can expect to hear from you, and when they can’t**

Relay Feedback Through Multiple Modalities

TO REDUCE “LITERACY LOAD” AND INCREASE EFFICIENCY

- Consider occasionally providing feedback through audio or video recordings
- Use tone of voice to clarify your emphasis, or provide encouragement
- Use screen-casting technology (Camtasia, Zoom) to record audio feedback over video of your computer screen while scrolling through student work

Foster Human Connection

TO BUILD INSTRUCTOR-STUDENT AND STUDENT-STUDENT COMMUNITY

- Use feedback to build rapport
- If possible, deliver feedback synchronously to each student once per semester (spread across assignments/the semester)
- Develop a feedback personality
- Assign peer review to foster student-student interaction

Additional Strategies for Making Feedback Efficient

PERENNIAL PRACTICES

- **Rubrics** (e.g. for assignments, participation, peer review)
- **Comment Banks**

Supporting Equity for Students

FLEXIBILITY

- Continue to let students know you're flexible
- When making accommodations, consider that our main objective is to facilitate learning, not provide assessments or grades
- When making accommodations, return to your backward planning: what, if nothing else, will students have learned or done this semester?

Supporting Equity for Students

CLARITY

- Make all your documents as clear, simple, and legible as possible
- Simplify rather than going into detail
- Use strategic formatting and layout
- Use clear and consistent document titles
- Highlight essential information graphically
- If you share an assignment or prompt verbally, share it in writing, too
- Begin recorded or live lectures with a visual agenda and refer back to it
- Avoid idioms that might not be clear for English Language Learners (e.g. cut to the chase, up in the air, hit the books)

Supporting Equity for Students

ACCESS AND PRIVACY

- Remember students are unlikely to be available for large uninterrupted periods
- Remember students are unlikely to have reliable privacy, or to connect reliably to the ideal device or broadband
- Assume some or many students won't be able to join synchronously or on video and make alternative plans
- Instead of high-stakes exams, consider portfolios, reflective assignments that demonstrate mastery, or exams that encourage outside research
- Design against plagiarism

Supporting Equity for Students

TRANSPARENCY

- Share your rationale, don't leave students to guess
- Provide any context that will help students succeed
- Regularly refer back to learning goals, agendas, patterns, narrative arcs
- If you change an assignment or make an accommodation, or decide against doing so, put it in context and explain why

Supporting Equity for Students

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN PARTICULAR

- Don't expect students to write error-free responses on discussion boards if those are spaces meant to replace informal class participation
- In peer review, discourage proofreading, direct editing, or a focus on error
- Consider introducing opportunities for translanguaging
- Create opportunities that motivate students to communicate

Day 3 Asynchronous Activity Part 1

IN ADVANCE OF SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION DAY 3, PLEASE LOOK AT YOUR SYLLABUS FOR AN UPCOMING COURSE

Focus on one thing you'd like to do differently, and draft a plan. Maybe it's:

- Identifying a formative feedback strategy you already use that you feel comfortable adapting or expanding in your upcoming online course.
- Identifying new or additional opportunities for formative feedback, as well as a plan for how and when to use what kinds of efficiencies.
- Identifying strategies apart from feedback to facilitate meaningful student-instructor interaction.
- Adapting your plans to better support equity for all students.

Day 3 Asynchronous Activity Part 2

POST ON BLACKBOARD

On your Cohort's Blackboard Discussion Board, write a short post explaining the plan you drafted.

- What is it?
- Why this thing?
- What challenges were you trying to resolve?
- What did you do to resolve those challenges?

Day 3 Asynchronous Activity Part 3

READ AND COMMENT

On your Cohort's Blackboard Discussion Board, read some of your colleagues' posts. Post at least one reply, but consider this an opportunity to build a community of co-thinkers that might extend beyond this Seminar.

Resources

- Borgman, Jessie, and Casey McArdle. *Personal, Accessible, Responsive, Strategic: Resources and Strategies for Online Writing Instructors. Practices & Possibilities*. The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado, 2019.
- Conrad, Rita-Marie, and J. Ana Donaldson. *Engaging the Online Learner: Activities and Resources for Creative Instruction*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.
- Darby, Flower, and James M. Lang. *Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Classes*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2019.
- Davidson, Cathy. "The Single Most Essential Requirement in Designing a Fall Online Course." *HASTAC*, 5/11/2020.

Resources

- Linder, Kathryn E., Mattison Hayes, Chrysanthemum, and Kelvin Thompson. *High-Impact Practices in Online Education: Research and Best Practices*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2018.
- Nilson, Linda B., and Ludwika A. Goodson. *Online Teaching at its Best: Merging Instructional Design with Teaching and Learning Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2018.
- Schiano, Bill. "Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities in Online Case Teaching: Insights from Two Case Teaching Experts." Harvard Business Publishing Webinar, 6/3/2020.
- Vai, Marjorie, and Kristen Sosulski. *Essentials of Online Course Design: A Standards-Based Guide*. Second edition. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Resources from Baruch Colleagues

- The Center for Teaching and Learning: See especially the many resources in “Teaching in the Time of Covid-19” and their popular Zoom workshops.
<https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/ctl/>
- The Writing Center’s Online Teaching FAQs:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-WPkkCYMGKHZKs2Nsl-t0rUGuZHMcJnWqncaOv3iZZQ/edit>