

Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education:

Applications for the
Classroom

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The Seven Principles

- Establish fundamental guidelines for meaningful learning in higher education
- Focus on the “how” of teaching, not on the “what”
- Are applicable in various educational settings

*Where did the Seven Principles for
Good Practice in Undergraduate
Education originate?*

From a study supported by the
American Association of Higher
Education, the Education Commission
of States, and the Johnson Foundation

Arthur Chickering and Zelda F.
Gamson

project managers of the study & authors of

*Applying the Seven Principles for Good
Practice in Undergraduate Education*
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991

The Seven Principles

1. Effective Student-faculty contact
2. Cooperation among students
3. Active learning by students
4. Prompt feedback to students
5. Emphasize time on task in classroom
6. High expectations for students
7. Respecting diverse talents and ways of learning

Principle 1:

Good
practice
encourages
student-
faculty
contact



Possibilities

- Learn their names as soon as possible
- Greet students as they enter the classroom
- Explain office hours to students
- Invite individual students to an office hour
- Send emails to the class as a whole and to individual students

Principle 2

Good practice encourages cooperation among students.



Possibilities

- Getting to know one another early will assist cooperation
- Jigsaw approach to cooperative learning
- Study partner or study group
- Group projects with individual accountability

Principle 3

Good practice encourages active learning by the students



Possibilities

- Think-pair-share
- Jigsaw approach is active learning
- One-minute paper
- After receiving test results, ask students what they will do differently next time
- Give mini lectures (15 to 20 min.) interspersed with engagement by students

(see document following PPT for ideas on active learning to try in the classroom)

Principle 4

Good practice gives prompt feedback to students



Possibilities

- Assign work to be graded early in the semester to give them and your feedback early
- ASAP – for most assignments, two weeks is too long
- Point out their strengths
- Be as concrete as possible with feedback-both positive and constructive

Principle 5

Good practice emphasizes time on task in the classroom



Possibilities

- Professor is punctual and ready to go
- Reduce “settling-in” time
- Reduce in-class time taking attendance
- Develop system for turning in/returning assignments
- Develop a system for movement into groups

Principle 6

Good practice communicates high expectations to students



Possibilities

- Tell them often how they can succeed
- Refer them to writing center, math center, etc. for extra help to help them succeed
- Explain what learning and studying are
- High standards may be achieved if students submit large assignments in stages
- Use types of questions in class that will be on exams

Principle 7

Good practice respects diverse talents and ways of learning

<http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/Departments/studev/skills.htm#LEARNING>



Possibilities

- Get an indication of them as learners early in the semester (2nd or 3rd class)
- If possible, allow for multiple ways of completing an assignment
- Assess students in a variety of ways
- Balance teaching methods to incorporate various learning styles

Summary

Applying the Seven Principles compels faculty to do the following:

- ✓ Create meaningful ways to relate to students
- ✓ Encourage cooperation among students

Summary continued

- ✓ Promote active learning by the students
- ✓ Give prompt feedback to students
- ✓ Emphasize time on task in the classroom
- ✓ Communicate high expectations to students
- ✓ Respect diverse talents and ways of learning

Some Ideas for Active Learning that also Check for Understanding (A quick summary by Patti Bartlett)

It does little good to teach if the learners have not understood. Formative assessment is checking for understanding. It generally is not graded but gives the instructor a quick check to determine how instruction is going. All of the ideas call for the student to be engaged in the learning process. Below are some techniques:

Think- Pair- Share

Instructor asks learners to either 1) respond to a question or a problem or 2) summarize in their own words key points in information just covered. Instructor asks learners to think about it for 30 seconds to 1-2 minutes, then at instructor's signal, learner orally shares with a peer (or triad if necessary) his or her thoughts. Finally, instructor calls on several (probably not more than three pairs) to share with the entire class.

Think-Write-Share

Same as Think-Pair-Share, but individual learner writes for two minutes and then shares with a peer.

Every Learner Response

Instructor poses some statements (or misstatements) about information that has just been covered and every learner must indicate agreement or disagreement; e.g., thumbs up or thumbs down or give sign language for yes or no, nod head yes or no, choral response, etc.

Muddiest (or Clearest) Point

Similar to the one-minute paper, the instructor asks the learners to respond to "What was the muddiest point in today's class?" or "What was the most difficult concept to comprehend?" or "What was the clearest point?" [This activity often gives the instructor the opportunity to make adjustments before the next class.]

Jigsaw Approach to Cooperative Learning

Jigsaw refers to breaking up the content into pieces. Students are placed in groups of 4-6 (it works best when you place students of varying abilities into the groups) so that you have a total of 4-6 groups.

Each group has the responsibility of "learning" together the content, usually using written material. After a time specified by the instructor, the students reassemble into new groups – predetermined by the instructor (an easy way to do it is to have them count off in their original groups at the end of the group study so that you will have new groups ready). Each new group must have a representative from the original group because the student from the original group is responsible for "teaching" members of the new group what he or she learned in the original group. When you initially try this, do it with a fairly simple activity that can be completed within a relatively short time so that their comfort level (and yours) increases. You can give the groups questions to guide their learning or simply ask them to master the material, making sure that everyone in the original group understands the material.