

What makes an excellent teacher?

FOLLOW UP TO ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION
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Brainstorming...

I asked each of you to brainstorm about “excellence” in teaching, “good enough” teaching, and “pitfalls” in teaching.

Here I’m presenting a summary of those with some follow up comments and ideas.

What are some pitfalls/things to avoid when teaching?

- Poor Class/Time Management
- Sticking to your agenda/plan “no matter what”
- Having a lack of confidence in your role as the teacher
- Adoption an “I’m the boss” attitude
- Not being clear on your understanding of the material
- Being late
- Cancelling class often
- Keeping ones course the same semester after semester
- Doing the same thing over and over and over and over
- Interrupting/over-talking
- Dishonesty
- Not being prepared
- Inconsistency

What makes you a “good enough” teacher?

- Nobody gets killed...(translation – a little bit of humor makes you a good teacher!)
- Predictability
- Fairness
- Knowledge of the subject matter you’re teaching
- familiarity with the breadth of the subject matter
- Trust students and win their respect
- Make reasonable demands of students
- Be adequately prepared
- Multiple modes of presenting
- Showing up (both physically and emotionally/mentally)
- Good communication
- Sense of humor
- Engaging Students
- 2 Weeks ahead of students
- Punctual (for class and returning assignments)
- Being prepared with understanding the material

What is excellence in teaching?

- Organization with the details: grading, attendance, emails, etc.
- Active engagement
- Help students apply material to practice
- Facilitate a culture of adult learners who teach each other
- Hard work
- Be prepared for each class and be flexible to allow students to lead at times
- Connecting concepts
- Conveying a passion for the subject matter
- Honesty
- Develop trust
- Working knowledge of the material
- The ability to explain difficult subject matter
- Being able to sit with ambiguity or not resolve something/not know the answer
- Using supervision and support resources
- Being over prepared
- Helping students to come to conclusions on their own – without your directive
- Students are able to use what you taught – putting it to use in practice

What is excellence in teaching? (continued)

- Being an expert in the content area
- Trusting students
- Respect and empathy
- Anticipate the needs of your students
- Be so familiar with your material that you can improvise
- Continuing to push yourself by revising, reflecting, researching
- Inspiring students
- Instilling a passion for learning
- Modeling lifelong learning
- Interactive classroom
- Return assignments/grades in a timely fashion
- Practiced lectures
- Use of up to date materials
- Timely feedback
- Knowing the information at hand and being consistent with it
- Creating engaging activities
- Thoughtful feedback

Some thoughts...

We can aspire to be excellent educators – but should allow ourselves some grace. Some days we're good enough – and some days we are excellent.

Don't be afraid to try new things... and don't be afraid to fail.

At the end of each class (or maybe at the end of the week if your class is hybrid or online) think about one thing you did well – we often tend to focus on the negative.

Teaching is hard work. Practice good self care and model that behavior to students!

Use your support resources within the College – we're here for you and we want to help you succeed!

In addition to the resources presented at Instructor Orientation, there are additional resources available to you/to your students. A few are listed on the following slide.

Resources for you and your students:

We have a Social Work Library Guide:

- <http://libguides.uky.edu/swbasic>
- We have access to GREAT reference librarians who WANT to engage with your students!

◦ **Our College Library Liason is:**

Jo Staggs-Neel

Reference Librarian -1, north wing, 2nd floor,
Young Library 40506-0456

(859) 218-1409

Jo.Staggs-Neel@uky.edu

The Writing Center – available virtually
and face to face –

<https://wrd.as.uky.edu/information-instructors>

Thank you!

Thank you – so very much – for your contributions to the College and to the Profession of Social Work.

If I can help you in any way, please let me know!

-Diane

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