

The Practical Professor

No. 13

Quick and easy tips, questions, and suggestions for improving teaching and learning.

The 5 Most Important Topics

Student Feedback Technique Series #4

This week's Student Feedback Technique (SFT) provides a double-benefit. First, it helps you get students to reflect upon what they are learning. Second, another key to diagnostic-based teaching is **knowing** if students are receiving what we are teaching. Do expect a range of responses because students take a course for all sorts of reasons. However, if you are being clear, many responses should reflect what you have emphasized.

The SFT appears below, but here is the process:

Ask students to...

- ❖ Fill out this SFT individually and anonymously in 5 – 6 minutes
- ❖ Be as complete as they can be in their responses – emphasize that there are no “right answers”
- ❖ Do not consult with each other before you answer

Finally, tell students that you will review their responses and tell them how you plan to use the information.

Analyze their responses. Do most include topics you believe students should be listing as “important topics” in your course? Is there too much of a spread of topics (if so, what can you do in the future to better emphasize what you consider the most important topics)? Are there some students who agree upon a topic that you do not feel is really that important (if so, ask students to voluntarily tell you why they feel it important to get more insight)? How will this information change the way you teach the course in the future?

In the next *The Practical Professor*: Tip Series #4

The 5 Most Important Topics

I need your help. At this point in the course, I need to know what you think the “**5 most important topics**” are that we have studied.

Please do not put your name on this – it is **not a quiz** and there **are no wrong answers**. Also, please just give me your personal response; do not check with each other. You do not need to explain the topic, or define it.

This will provide me valuable information both as I prepare further instruction and for the next time I teach this course.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Thank you for your input!

Also available!

Teaching

A series of practical and innovative teaching tips for college faculty

Back Issues

The Top 10...

- No. 1 – The All-Important First Day of Class
- No. 2 – Ways to Make Your Teaching Life Easier
- No. 3 – The Crucial Second and Third Classes
- No. 4 – Ways to Show Students that You Respect Them
- No. 5 – Promote Effective Student Study Skills
- No. 6 – Components of a Well-Planned Class
- No. 7 – Observe Your Teaching Tendencies
- No. 8 – Ways to Keep Your Students Learning
- No. 9 – Ways to Get Feedback on Teaching from Students
- No. 10 – Using Short Writing to Assess Learning
- No. 11 – Getting More (and Better) Student Questions
- No. 12 – Mixing Things up Mid-Semester
- No. 13 – Engaging Different Input Preferences
- No. 14 – Helping Students Stay the Journey
- No. 15 – Ways to End Your Course
- No. 16 – Resources for Learning and Teaching
- No. 17 – Create a Memorable AND Functional Syllabus
- No. 18 – Ways to Build Your Students' Self-Efficacy
- No. 19 – Practical Study Tips to Share with Your Students
- No. 20 – Laddering Thinking Skills
- No. 21 – Learning Based Ways to End Lessons
- No. 22 – Ways and Reasons to Be Vulnerable While Teaching
- No. 23 – Using Student Groups
- No. 24 – Components of a Complete Learning Experience
- No. 25 – Ways to Use Visuals for Learning
- No. 26 – Students' Locus of Control
- No. 27 – Help Students with Rigorous Writing Assignments
- No. 28 – Ways to Shake Up Your Teaching
- No. 29 – Teaching to Inspire
- No. 30 – Paths to Mindfulness

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