

# The Practical Professor

No. 3

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

## Who Are You as a College Faculty Member?

*Reflective Practice Series #1*

This week we introduce another type of monthly topic – who are you as a college faculty member? These ideas and questions will help you become more of what you want to be as a college faculty member. You will get the most out of these by first doing some quiet thinking, then some writing. Why writing? It is easy to fool ourselves into believing that our thoughts are well-formed and complete. Writing exposes weaknesses, holes, and perhaps even some scar tissue – all of which need work. AFTER writing individually, find 2 colleagues (no, not 5 because 5 is too many, you will just **listen** to each other – with two you can have a much more open and honest **dialogue**) and discuss your responses. Help each other achieve clarity.

**Question 1.** Do an experiment with several other faculty members that involves randomly selecting three above average (but not your very best) students who had you in class two years ago and who have not had contact with you since. Ask them to write what they remember about you and the course. You can also ask your Advising Center to find three such students of yours and have them ask the students to write.

**Question 2.** Use only one sentence to describe why you teach. Write it. Maximum of 20 words. Yes, 20. This is hard. This is really, really hard. That is why almost no one has done it, else you would see these statements on desks everywhere.

You know what comes next. Review what students who did well, but were probably not especially close to you, wrote about you and the course and compare that to why you say you teach. Pick one thing to work on this semester that will move students closer to being able to write, two years after they had you as a teacher, words that completely reflect why you say you do this job.

In the next *The Practical Professor*: Ask *The Practical Professor* #1

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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