

TEACHING IN THE WINTER TERM

The following URL provides UC staff and students with information re WT:

<http://www.canberra.edu.au/events-dates/2010-academic-calendar/winter-offerings>

The Commission for Accelerated Learning (CAP) website may be of more general interest:

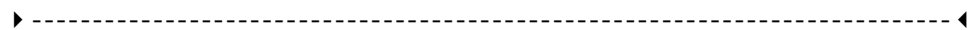
<http://www.capnetwork.org/index.php>

Thinking about WT *A spectrum of thinking*

Staff thinking will be distributed along the following spectrum.

WT = workload, fatigue, stress,
market-driven, loss of academic
rigour, McEducation and Drive-
Thru-U

WT = opportunity to
revisit/reconceptualise teaching
approaches



When the following attributes are present – certain personal teacher qualities such as enthusiasm, a variety of teaching methods, a comfortable classroom environment, appropriate assessment – intensive courses yield a higher quality learning experience than comparable semester-length classes (Scott, 2003)

“Last week I attended a lecture on the future of higher education. Reading from a prepared text, the speaker railed against the conservatism of universities, their resistance to change...The contrast between the lecturer’s message and his presentation method couldn’t have been greater” S. Schwartz, VC Macquarie University (2009)

Summer session, intensive off-shore teaching, flexible learning etc and *“With instructional configurations such as video streaming, listservs, chatrooms, Internet searches, e-mail, and bulletin boards, the concept of contact hours begins to blur” (Wlodkowski, 2003, p. 6)*

Designing for WT

1. Review WT models that may be appropriate for your unit
2. Design the unit: Preparation
3. Determine how syllabus concepts and content will be presented,
4. Provide opportunities for interaction and communication {student-to-teacher and student(s)-to-student(s)}
5. Align learning activities, assessment and feedback with the learning outcomes
6. Identify points where you will invite student feedback on evaluation of the unit

1. WT models

Models/organization of teaching

Main characteristic: an equal number of class hours is delivered in more concentrated bursts compared to the more traditional pattern of classes once or twice a week.

In the model that you adopt, an important consideration might be how you consider blended learning – balancing face-to-face teaching with the use of educational technologies (e.g., lecture streaming) and features of the learning management system (Moodle) to support teaching

Some models:

Davies & Pablo (2006) propose the following:

- **Block mode:** Very large chunks of teaching time, for example, whole day sessions, offered in week-long mode; two or three-week long mode and weekend mode.
- **Mixed modes:** where teaching is spread over weekends and evenings in moderately large time chunks but less than day length
- **Sporadic modes:** where teaching is offered in smaller time chunks over longer time periods (e.g., 18 days or 6- 7 weeks)
- **Sandwich modes:** where block modes are offered at the front and back end of a semester course with shorter periods of traditional teaching in between to allow for consolidation and reflection

Other considerations

- Adopt a modular structure which may consist of different delivery modes. e.g, Module 1: traditional lectures/tutes/labs/studio sessions etc; Module 2: project/group work; Module 3: e-module; Module 4: Print module etc
- Consider workload: Mornings (streamed lectures) may be ready in advance and coupled with small group discussions/tutorials/studio/lab sessions on some afternoons
- Look at making greater use of Mondays/Fridays

Teaching methods

- Use breaks during class to deal with some issues (in week-long intensive teaching, evenings can be used)
- Workshops, group work

2. Preparatory considerations

- Ascertain that there are the required numbers of students enrolled in your unit
- Provide clear advance information about your expectations in this unit, as well as detailed schedules of requirements
- Find out what questions are on the Unit Satisfaction Survey (USS) and address these proactively from the beginning of the unit
- Open access to your Moodle site and e-reserve/resources in advance so that students have the opportunity to commence early
- Prepare a calendar of specific dates and distribute this early (e.g., Moodle calendar).
- Develop a clear overview of how you will approach WT and present in the first session
- Successful WT requires "good planning, well-organised and structured activities, a multitude of teaching strategies, a focus on learning objectives, and accurate assessment" (Daniel, 2000)
- Students believed that organisation was one of the most important factors to successful intensive courses (Scott, 2003, p. 31)

3. Presenting syllabus concepts and content

Options

Consider blended learning, mixing face-to-face and online delivery

- Schedule and present traditional face-to-face lectures
- Re-use streamed lectures from the same unit in another semester
- Record/edit lectures for WT units
- Replace/complement/supplement the lecture model with workshops, project work, symposiums etc
- Review/edit content and possibly provide fewer but deeper topics
- One student noted "I don't think the pure lecture with five minutes of questions at the end of class is going to work in the intensive format". Instead, students wanted to engage the material actively. (Scott, 2003, p. 31)

4. Interaction and communication

- Indicate the convener's consultation times, room number, email address, preferred contact style
- Schedule tutorials, discussions, group activities etc that encourage student-to-staff as well as student-to-student interactions.
- Set expectations, protocols, netiquette etc about your engagement (or not) in these conversations
- Use student appointments, review sessions or email communication to complement in-class feedback
- Take advantage of appropriate technologies to give students the opportunity to "talk with each other" e.g., formal discussion through Moodle and sharpen your e-moderation skills
- Attend to your professional development. A recent student comment: "Did not have an opportunity to just chat with other students as distinct from posting to particular topic discussions. Have staff been properly inserviced re usage?"
- The WT teacher needs "to keep things moving and organise a full day's teaching so that the pace and tempo are manageable and enthusiasm remains high. In this regard, flexibility is a must and students and staff need to create a climate for learning where students and staff feel comfortable enough to negotiate their learning experience so that adjustments are made where necessary, while at the same time maintaining quality and educational standards". (Clark & Clark, 2000)

5. Alignment of learning activities and assessment with the learning outcomes

Learning activities

- Focus on diversity – relevant case studies, student presentations, role plays, debates, skills acquisition, links with case studies
- Build on linkages with previous units

Assessment

Given busy and compressed schedules, staff and students will focus on assessment and WT will intensify this behaviour.

- Choose and schedule student assessment carefully
- Consider some in-class assignments
- Assessment is continuous and embedded in learning tasks (Chen, 2007, p. 74)
- Explore opportunities for self, peer and group assessment { See <http://creative.canberra.edu.au>
- If online forums are conducted, consider assessing

contributions. This means thinking more carefully about the discussion tasks that are set, making sure they're designed to align with the outcomes.

- Consider dropping exams if they are not required by Professional Association etc

Providing feedback on assignment

- Develop rubrics
- Provide exemplars [perhaps after assessment items have been completed and marked]
- Compile an FAQ file

6. Evaluating your unit

Options:

- Ascertain students' pre-entry expectations and administer post-unit review
- Harvard one minute reviews: students write down what they consider (a) the main point of the class and (b) the main question they still have as they leave. Address their responses at the beginning of the next session.
- Consider gathering formative feedback mid-way through the unit
- Design specific online confidential, anonymous surveys to gather student feedback on specific issues

References

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