

CELT Teaching Tip for October 18, 2018

Piecing it all together: Finding the purpose in the everyday

Recently, I had the opportunity to observe a class. The instructor was engaging and engaged, the students were paying attention, taking notes and actively participating in Top Hat questions peppered throughout the session. As the end of class neared, within earshot, one of the students turned to another and said, "I just wish I knew how it all pieced together."

If you designed your course with Constructive Alignment (View [CELT's Basic Course Design: Aligning Course Objectives with Class Assignments](http://bit.ly/coursealignment) webpage (<http://bit.ly/coursealignment>)), you know that your course goals are linked to your teaching and learning activities, to classroom assessments and evaluation, to course learning objectives, and ultimately to course learning outcomes. Even if you used this backward design process, your students might still struggle with really grasping the bigger picture of how your lesson fits within the course, or even how the course fits within the major and, perhaps their future careers. There are a number of strategies that you can use to help the students make sense and find the purpose in the everyday class session. These include:

Begin a class session with the "big picture." In many courses, the material is taught chronologically or through a sequence of steps. The sequential nature can lead to an approach where students pay attention to the individual steps, but fail to understand the broader narrative. Before an upcoming lesson, consider how the day's material fits into the context of your subject matter. Explain to the students how this material links to previous material covered and how the lesson will look forward to upcoming content.

Reduce the complexity of visuals. If you use graphs, visuals, images in your course, show the image in its most basic form and then build it up gradually to show the complex illustration. Add labels to the image as you build it up to explain the purpose of each element of the visual, graph, or image.

Help students find meaning. Is there a way to relate the subject to something students already know either through previous content learned or to a current day topic? Demonstrating the relevance and importance of your topic helps students make meaning and thoughtfully consider (and hopefully realize) why it is important to gain the knowledge through their attendance, their participation inside and outside of class, and through ongoing practice.

Happy Week 9 of the fall semester,

Sara Marcketti, Director
Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

Reference: Fry, H., Ketteridge, S., & Marshall, S. (2009). A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education: Enhancing academic practice / edited by Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge, Stephanie Marshall. (3rd ed.). New York ; London: Routledge.

CELT's Award-Winning Seminar Series (Fall 2018)

We are hosting the following outstanding faculty to present in our Award-Winning Seminar Series during October and November:

- **Advising Graduate Students: Ten tips for major professors**, Oct. 24 (12:10-1 p.m., 2030 Morrill Hall) will be presented by Dan Nettleton, Distinguished Professor, Statistics, ISU Margaret Ellen White Graduate Faculty Awardee
- **Among Others: How to really make your classroom more inclusive**, Nov. 7 (12:10-1 p.m., 2030 Morrill Hall) will be presented by Javier Vela-Becerra, Associate Professor, Chemistry, Martin Luther King, Jr. Advancing One Community Faculty awardee

To learn more visit [CELT's Event and Registration](http://www.celt.iastate.edu/events-registration) website (<http://www.celt.iastate.edu/events-registration>) and register via the [Learn@ISU](http://learn.iastate.edu/) website (<http://learn.iastate.edu/>).

Disability Awareness Week (October 29-November 2)

Disability Awareness Week (October 29-November 2) is a series of events aimed at educating the Iowa State University community about the wide variety of disabilities, bringing awareness to the barriers faced by many of these individuals, and advocating for a more accessible ISU. For a full list of activities, please visit [Student Accessibility Services Disability Awareness Week](http://bit.ly/2NCDxG9) website (<http://bit.ly/2NCDxG9>). To ensure that your online course is accessible for all of your students is to download [CELТ's Universal Design Checklist for Your Online Course \(PDF\)](http://bit.ly/2CMDgzB) (<http://bit.ly/2CMDgzB>)

Proposals sought for the Team-Based Learning Collaborative Research Grant

The Team-Based Learning Collaborative (TBLC) wishes to encourage and support research and scholarship in Team-Based Learning, and therefore announces the 2019 research grant program. Proposals are due on November 1. Visit the [TBLC Research Grant Applications](http://bit.ly/2yco0Hd) website (<http://bit.ly/2yco0Hd>).

2019-20 Miller Faculty Fellowship proposals due Dec. 10

Miller Faculty Fellowships have provided funding to over 800 faculty to improve the undergraduate teaching and learning experience at Iowa State University. The Miller Faculty Fellowship Program provides recipients with opportunities to enhance their scholarly work in the undergraduate academic programs of the university and to develop innovative approaches to enhance student learning. Recipients will have up to twelve months to meet the goals of their Fellowship project.

The deadline for Miller Faculty Fellowship proposals for the 2019-20 academic year is Monday, Dec. 10. [Program and application details](http://bit.ly/2POBznD) are online (<http://bit.ly/2POBznD>). Questions may be directed to CELТ via email to celt-miller@iastate.edu

Upcoming CELТ programs

To learn more about our comprehensive array of events visit [CELТ's Event and Registration](http://www.celt.iastate.edu/events-registration) website

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- Workshop, **Publish Teaching in Your Discipline: How to get started, succeed, and disseminate your educational research**, Oct. 23 (12:10-1 p.m.)
- Workshop, **Effectively managing disruptive classroom behavior**, Nov. 1 (12:10-1:00 p.m.)

Teaching Inclusively

- Online event, **How Can We Minimize Implicit Bias in Our Academic Communities?** (CIRTLCast Series - Part 3 of 4), Oct. 22 (10:30-11:30 a.m., in-person and online)
- Online event, **How Can We Interrupt and Mitigate Implicit Bias When We Witness It?** (CIRTLCast Series - Part 4 of 4), Oct. 29 (10:30-11:30 a.m., in-person and online)
- Conversation, **Navigating controversial topics in the classroom**, Oct. 30 (4-5 p.m.)

Quality Matters

- Quality Matters: Improving Your Online Course (IYOC), Oct. 23 (8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.) and IYOC Follow Up, Oct 23 (1-3 p.m.)
- Meeting, Quality Matters Learning Community, Oct. 25 (3-4:30 p.m.)

Canvas Training

For the most up-to-date list of Canvas training, view the [training schedule on the MyCanvas Teacher at ISU](http://bit.ly/2Mtg3Y7) website (<http://bit.ly/2Mtg3Y7>).