

# Teaching Tips

A Forum for discussion and tips for advancing teaching and learning at Mona

Instructional Development  
Unit UWI, Mona



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## WELCOME

The Instructional Development Unit welcomes all faculty to this new academic year. We trust this will be a very rewarding year as you once again redouble your efforts to advance teaching and learning here at the University of the West Indies Mona Campus. A special welcome is extended to all new members of faculty. We wish for you all a very successful teaching career on campus.

### Special points of interest:

- The Teaching Tips Newsletter is a publication of the Instructional Development Unit (IDU) at the UWI, Mona.
- The Newsletter is published once per month and provides tips for improving teaching and learning in higher education. It is available online (<http://myspot.mona.uwi.edu/idu/>) as well as in the office of the IDU.
- If you have an area that you would like to explore using this medium, do not hesitate to contact us at the IDU.

## Start the New Semester Right

### *Set the Climate*

On the first day of class or soon thereafter, seize the opportunity to set the climate for the rest of the semester by planning thoroughly and thoughtfully for your classes, especially those classes in the first three weeks.

### *Demonstrate your Passion*

Ensure your learning outcomes are written with the students in mind. Consider how they are most likely to be received. Think about your own experience with your subject area and those things that really spurred your interest in the field. Perhaps it was a mentor that pushed you to strive for all that you can be. Whatever it was, enter the classroom with an attitude of **dynamic engagement**. Your passion for the subject matter can have a contagious effect. This might very well set the tone for the rest of the semester.

### *Communicate High Expectations*

Communicate high expectations all the time to your students and assure them of your support as they navigate the halls of academia.

### *Build a Sense of Community*

Build rapport with students; build a sense of community in your classroom by letting students know that they are more than faces in a classroom with anonymous learners. Show that you do care!

### *Encourage Active Participation*

Encourage participation and active learning. Explain to students the benefits of active learning and why passive learning is not your preferred approach. Use various strategies in getting students involved (some ideas are available from the IDU). Ensure you create space in your classes to always take students questions and comments this will help to create a learning environment that values inquiry since you are demonstrating that students voices must be heard and their contributions are valuable in the learning process.

## Incorporating Active Learning in the Lecture

Incorporating activities into your lecture might include creating time and space for breaks and for engaging students in some kind class work activity. You want to involve students in the lecture/class in multiple ways.

One approach is to start the class with a question. Ask your students what they know or hope to learn about the topic. You could also provide some visual and invite their comments. Yet another approach is to pose a problem based on the reading or engage in a brain storming session that might even lead to the construction of a concept map on the board.

Some other simple ways to involve students during a lecture are to insert brief demonstrations or short, ungraded writing exercises followed by class discussion.

## The following are innovative approaches to make the lecture truly interactive:

*The Feedback Lecture:* In this teaching learning arrangement, the class will consist of two mini-lectures/lecturettes separated by a small-group study session built around a study guide.



*The Guided Lecture:* This pedagogical approach calls students to listen to a 20- to 30-minute presentation without taking notes, followed by their writing for five minutes what they remember and spending the remainder of the class period in small groups clarifying and elaborating the material.



*Periodic Recall:* In this activity, students will stop taking notes, close their books and write down two or three main points from the lecture thus far. Students will then be asked to compare and discuss what they have written with a partner, usually the person beside the student.



*Quizzes (using multiple choice or short answer questions):* This is an active teaching and learning formative assessment activity that can be used before or after the lecture. It can help focus the students on the key learning points and provide feedback on how well key issues have been learned. This might be further enhanced by allowing a few minutes to review the right and wrong answers at the end of a lecture. A meaningful addition to using multiple choice questions is to make five colour-coded cards for each student. Each of the five colours represents one of the choices in a standard multiple choice question. Students are then asked to vote by holding up the appropriate colour signifying their choice (a, b, c, d, or e). Each student is able to see how their peers “voted” and the teacher receives immediate feedback. A more sophisticated version of this can be achieved with an audience response system– a clicker!



*Engaging the class through cases:* During a lecture, the class can be asked to “work through” a case. The lecturer can stop the case presentation at different points, asking the class for input as the case unfolds. The lecturer can use straightforward questions that ask individuals to respond or alternatively use the write-pair-share technique or both interchangeably. A related case-method teaching technique is to assign parts of the audience a different perspective of a case or problem. A part of the class has to present the arguments related to that perspective whether they agree with it or not.



**Instructional Development Unit**