



Tips for Faculty Observation

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April 20, 2011



First, what makes a good teacher?

What the Best College Teachers Do

by Ken Bain


1. Know their subjects well
2. Treat their sessions as serious intellectual endeavors
3. Expect a lot from their students—objectives that “embody the kind of thinking and acting expected for life.”
4. Trust their students
5. Assess themselves regularly

I. The best college teachers know their subjects well

- Be intellectually curious
- Don't give an answer if you're not sure.
- Model learning strategies
- Talk about intellectually authentic topics.
- Keep discussions going. Let students explore and take their time as long as they are engaged

2. The best college teachers treat their sessions as serious intellectual endeavors

- Every class is an important part of your life and your students' lives.
- Any method will work if you demonstrate that you genuinely care about their learning.
- Students need to get feedback and feel encouraged to try again.




3. The best college teachers expect a lot from their students—objectives that “embody the kind of thinking and acting expected for life.”

- Give challenging assignments.
- If students are low skilled,
 - Spend more time introducing the assignment
 - Model a good answer or response
 - Break the assignment down into smaller parts
 - Give them much more time to respond
 - Allow them to give undeveloped answers


4. The best college teachers trust their students.

- Not all students are trustworthy, but most are.
- Students have lives. Insofar as possible, allow students to bring themselves into the classroom. They are not only a student, but a complete person.
- If a student does not do the work, don't take it personally.
- Help students understand their responsibilities and the consequences if they don't meet them.



5. The best college teachers assess their students and themselves regularly

- Use in-class techniques to see if you are getting through to your students.
 - Ask students to write questions down; use Explicit Direct Instruction techniques, online surveys.
- Ask for advice from fellow faculty members.
- Visit your colleagues' classrooms.
- Go to conferences to get new ideas.
- Try something new.

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- All evaluators (dean, chair, or peer) use the same class observation form found in the back of the CTA contract.
 - Evaluators meet with the instructor prior to and after the observation.
 - The instructor should provide the evaluator with a lesson plan for the session.
 - Evaluator comments should be constructive wherever possible.

CLASSROOM VISITATION REPORT

III. Organization for Teaching:

A. Goals 1 2 3 4 5

1. Clearly defined goals
3. Some recognizable goals detected
5. No apparent goal for the session

Comments:

B. Planning 1 2 3 4 5

1. Creative planning
3. Evidence of some preparation
5. No evidence of prior preparation

Comments:

Organization of Materials 1 2 3 4 5

1. Clearly organized, easy to follow pattern
3. Discernable organizational pattern
5. Rambling and confusing

Comments:

IV. Teaching Effectiveness:

A. Subject Matter 1 2 3 4 5

1. Instructor demonstrates a broad knowledge of the field
3. Instructor demonstrates an adequate understanding of the subject
5. Instructor appears to be unprepared in the subject being covered

B. Presentation 1 2 3 4 5

1. Clear, enthusiastic, well poised and direct, suitable vocabulary and voice
3. Generally clear and understandable, good vocabulary and voice
5. Inaudible, lacks enthusiasm, relies too heavily upon notes

C. Motivation 1 2 3 4 5

1. The instructor generates a high degree of student interest
3. The instructor generates some student interest
5. The instructor impairs student interest in the subject

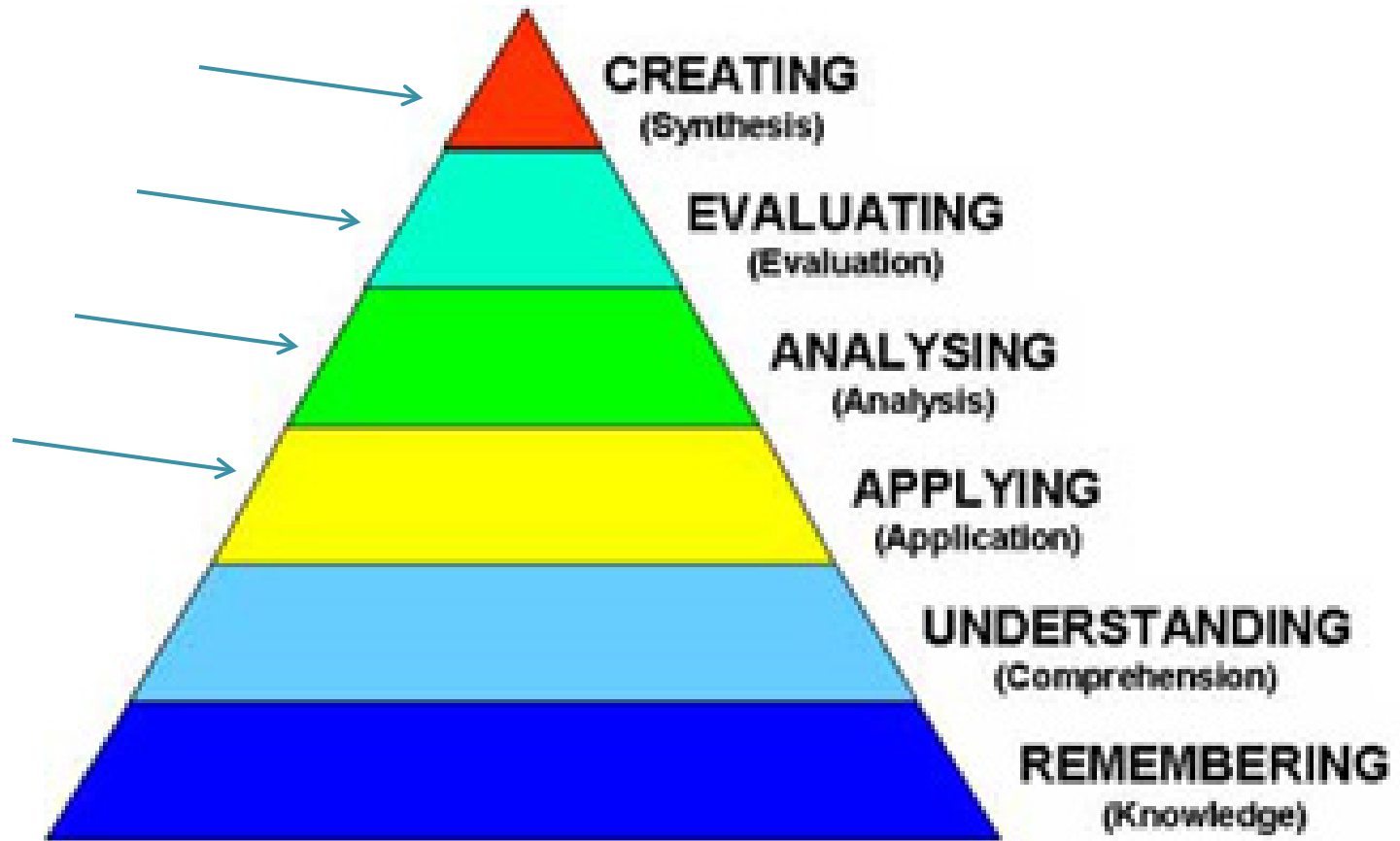
Teaching Effectiveness

D. Technique 1 2 3 4 5

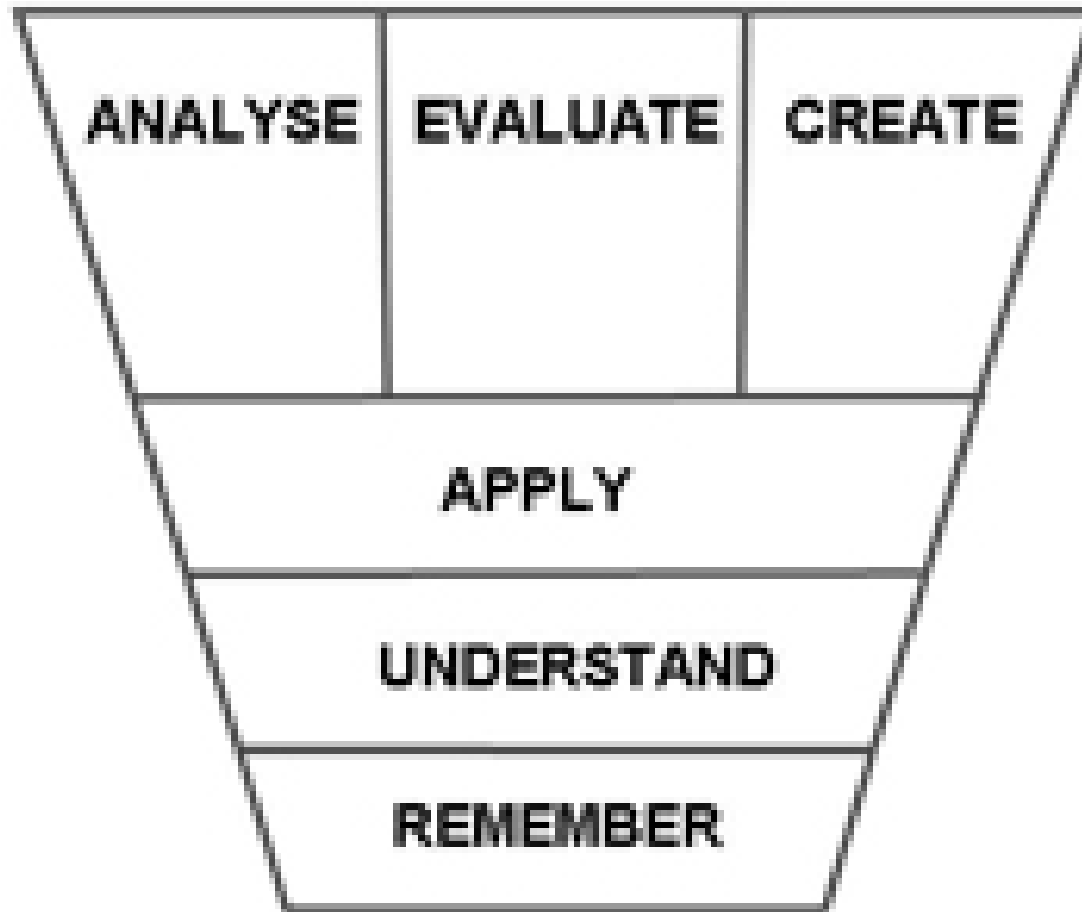
1. Selection and use are appropriate to the objectives of the class
3. Selection and use do not detract from accomplishing the class objectives
5. Selection and use detract from accomplishing class objectives

Use a mixture of techniques including lecture, blackboard, student pairing a group activities. Try to turn over the learning to the students with your guidance.

Try to aim for the higher end Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Behavior in student assignments



Alternate Form of Bloom's Taxonomy



Student Relationship:

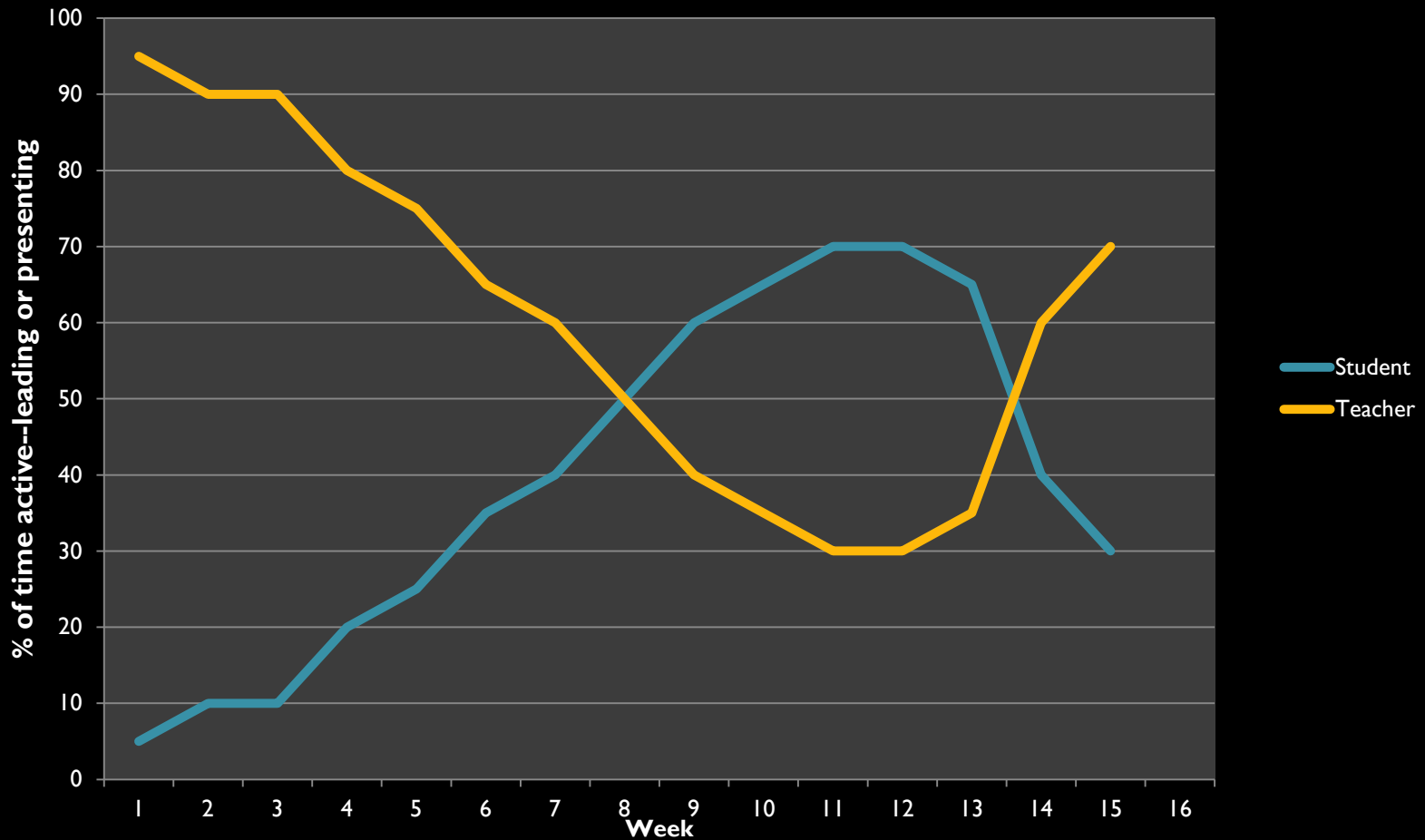
A. Student Attention and Involvement

1 2 3 4 5

1. Meaningful and active student involvement
3. Some student involvement evident
5. Little student involvement evident

Students should be interacting with the instructor or each other. Don't use "cold call" methods to ask students to perform without time for preparation. Use Explicit Direct Instruction or some other method to coax students into action.

As the semester moves forward, students should assume more responsibility for leading the class.



Student Relationship:

B. Attitude Toward Students 1 2 3 4 5

- 1. Seeks ways to be of assistance to students
- 3. Is helpful to students when called upon
- 5. Apparent negative attitude toward students

C. Student Attitude 1 2 3 4 5

- 1. Excellent rapport, highly respected, excellent learning environment
- 3. Good rapport, instructor respected, good learning environment created in classroom.
- 5. Poor rapport with students in a classroom situation.

Evaluation scores and numbers should match


1 = A

2 = B

3 = C

4 = D

5 = F



Evaluators should write in plain language that any reasonable person would understand and not jargon.



Organization of Materials

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1. Clearly organized, easy to follow pattern

3. Discernable organizational pattern

5. Rambling and confusing

Comments:

What number (grade) would correspond to these comments?

- The instructor might consider spending more time in laying out the length of each class activity. A B C D F
- The lesson plan was superlative had it been a plan for three or four classes and not just this one. A B C D F
- The instructor was organized for about ten minutes of the period. A B C D F

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- The instructor was organized for about ten minutes of the period. A B C **D** F

What score goes with each comment?

Presentation: Jokes and asides were funny and showed the instructor's willingness to take risks in the classroom. However, many students appeared lost. A B C D F

Organization: Extensive preparation on study guides was obviated by a hurry up pace that reduced the effectiveness of the lesson in order to maintain the announced learning objective plan for the day. A B C D F

Technique: Too much emphasis on structuralism instead of communicative competence. A B C D F

Underdeveloped guidelines on how the canon of structuralism conflicts with deconstructionism in post-Lacan critical theory. A B C D F

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Often, the scores are at a higher level than the comments would imply, as in these examples.



Goals: Goals were inferable from numerous rephrasing of the initial instruction regarding student voice and intended audience. A B C D F

Attitude to Students: The instructor was clearly caring, but one or two comments undermined student confidence and willingness to participate. A B C D F

Subject Matter: The instructor showed a high degree of knowledge in the subject matter but students seemed to be a bit intimidated and bewildered. A B C D F

Presentation: Instructor might want to consider a more dynamic presentation approach. A B C D F

Clearer Comments

Goals: Goals were clear. Instructor wrote his goals on the board, which aligned with the syllabus. Students knew what to do and what they were supposed to be learning. A B C D F

Attitude to Students: The instructor used humor to soften the difficulty of the lesson and constantly went around the room to check each group's understanding. A B C D F

Subject Matter: The instructor was very knowledgeable overall but made a misstatement about the structure of the judicial branch. A B C D F

Clearer Comments

Presentation: The instructor should speak a little more slowly. A B C D F

Organization: Instructor presented a clear introduction to the lesson, then modeled a good answer. Then students worked in groups and finally each group reported back to the whole class. Well done. A B C D F

Technique: Instructor skillfully used lecture followed by students volunteering to come to the board. A B C D F

Purpose of Faculty Evaluations

- The evaluation process is a way to monitor how classes are being taught and to provide feedback on how to improve instruction at IVC.
- We hope to provide constructive criticism and support for improvement.