

Teaching Learning Center

CREATING A CLASSROOM AGENDA

Running an effective classroom is much like running an effective meeting, as observed by Sharon Hamilton, English professor, IUPUI. When planning a meeting you determine what topics must be discussed, what tasks the participants need to accomplish, and what steps need to be taken to accomplish these tasks. Next you determine how long each task will take and plan the meeting accordingly. "Your experience tells you that a well-planned agenda often results in a well-executed meeting," states Ms. Hamilton. She continues to say that an agenda can be prepared for the class either in written form as a handout, written on the board as the class progresses, or as a combination of the two.

Objectives for the class: Focuses the class and you on what is to be accomplished.

Outline of major topics for discussion: A place to make the connections between the objectives and discussions clear for the students.

Approximate time for each topic: Allows extra time for lively discussions but helps keep everyone on track.

Opportunities to check understanding: Plan to check your students' understanding after talking about two or three difficult concepts to safeguard against confusion later.

The one-minute essay: Students write or apply what they just discussed then share it with another student; differences are discussed and questions addressed.

The one-minute chat session: Pair up students and allow them to discuss the concept in their own words or apply it to a new situation or problem.

Follow-up for retention and extension: This can be accomplished through reading or writing assignments, "an entry into new work," or through a variety of other tasks. By making connections between the class work and the follow-up work, students are able to see the importance of homework assignments.

Closure: Prior to the end of class, revisit your objectives. Ask the students to either write about the objectives or write down any questions they may have about the concepts discussed and respond to these questions at the beginning of the next class meeting.

The benefits: Sharon Hamilton notes that the benefits are many and include "explicit connections between each class, recapitulation of important concepts from previous classes, opportunities to clarify potential confusion, a strong signal to students that confusion is a necessary part of learning and that students' questions play a significant role in the learning of the entire class."

Adjournment!

Sharon Hamilton, English, IUPUI
More Quick Hits: Successful Strategies by Award-Winning Teachers



SOME OF THE BEST FREE SOFTWARE OF 2009:

- ◆ **Audacity:** Free sound editor. audacity.sourceforge.net
- ◆ **Zamzar:** Free site for file conversion. Easily converts a .wps file to .doc. www.zamzar.com
- ◆ **Timetoast:** Free way to create timelines for project management and other applications. www.timetoast.com
- ◆ **Photosynth:** Free way to create 3-d interactive experiences from photos. www.photosynth.com
- ◆ **CamStudio:** Free screen capture and voice recording software. www.camstudio.org



A NEW FACE IN THE TLC:

Timothy Sonnier has worked for the DCCCD college district for four years, and Cedar Valley for three years. He graduated from the University of Texas at Dallas with a Masters Degree in Computer Science. Tim is thrilled to be a part of the Teaching Learning Center and looks forward to helping the faculty and staff with their courses. Tim loves to swing dance and has been doing so for the past three years. He was also in a swing dancing performance group called the ACME Swing Dance Company! Tim has been known to make soap, occasionally practices archery, and martial arts. He also likes dogs, though he currently does not have one. Please feel free to stop by the TLC to learn more about Tim and welcome him to our team!



*Timothy Sonnier, TLC
Instructional Specialist*

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CEDAR VALLEY COLLEGE

Teaching Learning Center

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THE ECAMPUS 9 TRANSITION

The first look at eCampus 9 revealed a similar yet more straightforward new version. What was once a long complicated journey to get from point A to point B has now been truncated to a nice, clean straight line. The interface appears to be much more user-friendly and easier to navigate. There are several changes which make eCampus 9 a great improvement:

Drag and drop modules: The home page, course menu, control panel, and other areas are now able to be moved around and altered easily and quickly to achieve the desired result.

Hide/Show button: One button at the top of the home page allows the instructor to easily toggle between instructor and student views.

Simple renaming, deleting, or hiding: A simple right-click allows the instructor to change the name of a menu item, delete or hide it.

'Visible' hidden items: When a menu item is hidden a gray box appears next to the item to show it is hidden to the student.

Subheadings: Subheadings may be created to label a set of course menu items and make them stand out from the others.

Dividers: Dividers may be created to further separate the subheadings and areas from other areas on the course menu.

Adding content: Very similar, the menus look different but everything you need is easily accessible.

Training videos are available if you would like to take a look:

Go to eCampus then access courses > training and support > instructor tutorials eCampus version 9.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!