WHAT ALL INSTRUCTORS SHOULD KNOW

URI TEACH SHEET

Create an environment where you are able to MOTIVATE, ENGAGE, and RESPOND

MOTIVATE
Motivation is critical for learning and essential for effective teaching.

SHOW:
- The subject is interesting, relevant, valuable to learn, worthwhile, and fun
- The subject is challenging, but all students can master it with effort
- You care about all students’ successfully learning the material

REMEMBER:
- Most students do not have the benefit of your experience and perspective
  so be sure to convey why you are drawn to this subject
- Recognize students think differently than do you
- Scare tactics, such as saying the subject is really difficult or that many students will fail, are demotivating to many students

Approach Teaching as a Challenging Subject that can be Mastered
- Understand how people learn and what processes facilitate learning—these are understood and well established
- Use teaching practices that have been proven to be effective
- Don’t be afraid to request support and to use what works

ENGAGE
Think of yourself as a “coach of thinking” rather than a “dispenser of information”

Lay out the Framework for What You Want Students to Learn

SHOW:
- How to apply the knowledge, rather than just the facts
- Students how to study effectively - these are readily acquired skills that are important but are rarely taught
- What is required for conceptual mastery and retention

REMEMBER:
- Understanding how to apply knowledge is critical to mastering the subject
- Make time for student practice

Discover What Your Students Are Thinking

SHOW:
- Connect to and build on their prior knowledge
- Examine student preconceptions
- Probe students’ understanding and adjust teaching when you find many are not getting it

REMEMBER:
- Understanding how to apply knowledge is critical to mastering the subject
- Make time for student practice

Teach students how to learn

- Model expert thinking.
- Be careful not to skip steps that may be automatic for you.
- Show how to best understand the material

RESPOND
Timely and specific feedback is critical for learning

SHOW:
- Students how to improve with detailed, constructive feedback (“formative assessment”)
- Students where or why they have made a mistake so showing them is important

REMEMBER:
- For most students, grades define the expectations and what is important in a course and to you
- Give points for what you value (e.g. homework, reading, in-class participation, quizzes, and pre-tests)

“Learning” requires intense mental activity with resulting changes in the brain of the learner.

The ability to teach effectively is not innate – it can be learned much like a scholarly discipline.

GETTING STARTED
Establish a Desired Class Culture

• Use the first week to set expectations and the tone for the rest of the term
• Explain your teaching style
• Share course goals and show why the course is worthwhile
• Be confident in how you will teach, don’t apologize for using evidence-based methods

CONTACT:
For additional support or with any questions, please contact:

Joshua Caulkins at URI,
Office of Student Learning,
Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation (SLOAA) at:
caulkins@mail.uri.edu


Layout Design and Editing by:
The College & University Research Collaborative