http://scaleup.ncsu.edu

SCALE-UP model – Additional practical suggestions

Practical tips to make the classroom an environment conducive to student learning:

1) Encourage student discussions instead of instructor talking - monitor yourself.

2) Ask students to explain things rather than having the instructor do it. For example: At the end of an activity, have students summarize the central point of the activity. Students may pass their notebooks to the person on their right. Ask students to read the best ones. This gets students to reflect on what they are doing, lets them praise each other for high quality academic work, and gets them to indicate the main ideas rather than listening to the instructor do it. They listen more critically to their peers.

3) Have a timer displaying the remaining time for an activity. Students will use as much time as you let them to the detriment of coverage. This helps with class time management.

4) Randomly call on students so everyone knows they need to be ready.

5) Try to find the balance between answering questions directly and asking questions which lead them to the answer. If they don't think there is any value in asking you (because you only ask them more questions which don't help them), they'll quit asking.

6) Students appreciate formative feedback. Weekly quizzes or journal entries or one-paragraph summaries can tell whether or not they know the material and if deficiencies occur. Electronic systems can help with grading and/or monitoring.

7) Be flexible and allow yourself time to get familiarized and master a specific pedagogical strategy. If you decide to try collaborative work in class, start with small steps and build towards fully implementing collaborative techniques. Do not abandon a strategy after just a couple of tries. Give yourself at least a semester, reflect, modify, and try again.

8) The big advantage of SCALE-UP is that you get constant feedback on what the students understand and what they don't. If you feel that many students are confused, work to clear up the problem. Either you can find a student or group that understands things and they can explain it to everyone, or you can explain it yourself with a mini-lecture. Lecture time should be “powered” to address students’ challenges.

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