

Value of Self-Reflection in Teaching

Teaching is a challenging Profession. Self-reflection offers faculty an opportunity to think on what works and what does not in their classroom. Faculty can use reflective teaching as a way to analyze and evaluate their own practices and can focus on what works. Faculty first need to admit that no matter how good a lesson is, the teaching strategies can always be improved and often this is where we seek out our colleagues' opinions. Self-reflection is important because it's a process that makes you collect, record, and analyze everything that happened during the lesson so that you can make improvements in your teaching strategies where necessary.

Process of Reflection

Connecting self-reflection to effective teaching is a process. The first step is to figure out what you want to reflect upon. Are you looking at a particular aspect of your teaching or is this reflection in response to a specific problem in your classroom? Whatever may be the issue, you should first start by collecting information. Here are a few ways that you can do this:

- a) **Reflective Entries:** Entries is an easy way to reflect upon what happened during your instruction on a daily basis. After each lesson, simply list down a few notes describing your reactions and feelings, and then follow up with any observations you have about your students. If it helps, you can break up your entries into concrete sections, such lesson objectives, materials, classroom management, students, faculty, etc. In this way, you can be consistent with how you measure your assessments time after time. You can find specific questions to ask yourself.
- b) **Student Observation:** Students are very observant and they are eager to give feedback. You can hand out a simple survey or questionnaire at the end of your class to get the students' perspectives on how the lesson went. Think critically and keep it short about what questions you'd like to ask, and encourage your students to express their opinion. In the due time it will be a great learning experience through feedbacks as well as you are giving students an indirect exercise in writing.
- c) **Peer Observation:** Invite a colleague to come to your classroom and observe your teaching. This is much different, more relaxed and you can be comfortable, than when you have your department head coming in and watching you. As a result, you'll be able to teach more naturally and give your colleague an honest perspective of your instruction methods. To help them frame your lesson critique more clearly, create a questionnaire for your colleague or if the college has the system of peer review then use it to fill out as they observe. Now it's time for you to sit down with them and they can more accurately convey what they observed.

d) Video Recording: A video recording of your teaching is valuable because it provides an unaltered and unbiased viewpoint for how effective your lesson may be from both a teacher and student perspective. Additionally, a video may act as an additional set of eyes to catch errant behaviour that you hadn't spotted at the time. Recording also allows to get feedback from peer and to objectively measure progress, helping them to gain greater understanding of their own abilities and traits.
