Applying Type-A Tendencies to Teaching: Tips to Coordinate the Chaos and Support Student Success

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I Care Because...

- SMHS instructional designer “hat:”
  - Best practices for education
  - Students AND professors learn more
  - Want to best serve you; see student and program-level success
  - Don’t want to bury anyone in work
- Adjunct professor "hat:"
  - Teach 2-3 graduate level courses per semester
- Life outside of work “hat.”
We Know What Works

Use class time for things that can’t be done between classes. When we follow this mantra, things can look pretty similar…

► **Teaching Face-to-Face**
  ► iRAT/gRAT (Blackboard, other online quiz tool, or paper)
  ► Active learning and project work (groups or individual)
  ► Discussion and interaction among peers and with you (the expert)

► **Teaching Online**
  ► iRAT/gRAT (Blackboard or other online quiz tool)
  ► Active learning and project work (breakout groups or individual)
  ► Discussion and interaction among peers and with you (the expert) using Zoom or discussion boards
Is This Another Active Learning Cheer Session?

- Research shows that active learning and collaborative, constructivist strategies are often most effective.
- There isn’t enough time in the day to deal with the extra work it seems to require.
  - Students have more questions, need more scaffolding.
  - Can’t automate or auto-grade many “authentic” activities;
  - Need to invest time to develop rapport with students, especially online;
What’s Your Problem?

- A few of mine have been:
  - Time spent designing, facilitating, grading, and participating in activities online and face-to-face
  - Differing student personalities & needs, late adds, exceptions
  - Students sending emails to ask questions, looking for a response ASAP
  - Keeping on top of schedules and who is doing what

- How about you?
For The Rest of the Session

- **Setting the stage**: relay expectations for students, scaffold for everyone, and lay the groundwork for your own easier semester (and beyond) – before it even starts.

- **Making technology work**: What to do before class to avoid problems later.

- **Place responsibility on students**: Learn to share the load of class management and even assessment.

- **Establish rapport with students**: A few memory-saving hacks to remain in the loop and avoid seeming clueless.
How Much Time Do you Spend....

- BEFORE the term: setting up your class materials, activities, and technology?

- DURING an average week of the term, outside of class, on class-related activities?
Set the Stage for Student Success

Do the work up front to save your sanity later.

▶ Teaching Anywhere
▶ Set expectations in writing.
▶ Rubrics, Checklists, Assignment Details documents for students:
   ▶ More info for students now = less questions for you later
   ▶ Reuse next term. Minimal time spent
   ▶ See handouts #1 & #2
▶ Create an FAQ.

▶ Teaching Online
▶ Do all of the previous, and…
▶ Always state the time zone for any activity.
▶ Be sure all is posted on Blackboard.
   ▶ ORGANIZE.
Set the Stage for YOUR Success

- Generic due dates (where feasible)
  - Keep actual dates in only one location.
    - “Due every Wednesday.”
    - “Comment by Saturday.”
    - “Due at the end of Week 7.”
- Save emails and/or Blackboard course announcements
  - Use next year/semester with minor edits
  - Same for discussion board prompts
Set the Stage for YOUR Success

- Calendar, Calendar, CALENDAR!!!
  - Important dates (grades are due; last day to drop)
  - Schedule time to grade/work on class
    - **BLOCK IT OFF in Outlook!!**
  - Tell yourself: “Answer class emails on Wed from 1-1:30; Sunday from 7-7:30.”
  - Tell students: “I will answer class emails within 72 hours.”
Peek at my Calendar...
Set the Stage for YOUR Success

- Reuse everything!
  - Don’t reinvent the wheel
- Address potential questions NOW
  - Refer to it later

- How do you save time?
  - Energy?
  - Sanity?
Who uses at least some technology?

Tech tools

- Set up any assignment drop boxes, discussion boards, wikis, blogs, etc.
- Record any lectures (review older ones for accuracy).
- Blackboard: "Display After/Display Until."
Tame the Technology

- Web conferencing
  - Test it
  - Have students test it
  - Build in time for problems on day 1
  - Refer students to tech support
Place **Responsibility on Students**

- Peer review. Have students grade each other using your rubric.
  - Guidelines for kind, constructive, helpful suggestions.
  - Revision based on peer suggestions
  - Makes your grading easier
- Online F.A.Q.
  - Students manage it
  - Direct them to it if they email
- Discussions and Class Activities
  - Student-led, student facilitated. Leader(s) change weekly.
Establish Rapport Through Faster Feedback

- Schedule time Use a rubric or checklist
- Peer review to get the partial picture
- Mini-rubric or checklist to grade project presentations. (See handout #3.)
  - Gives you the 10,000 foot view of the project
  - Identify high points and red flags
- Build a repository of “canned” feedback
  - Change to reflect individual. Do not give same feedback to all students!
Establish Rapport Through Informed Communication

- Create cheat sheets or systems to suit your needs
  - Phonetic spelling or nicknames
  - Distance student locations
  - Personal info
- How have you solved a unique problem? (Or... do you have one that needs solving?)
Example: Drowning in Theses...

- students working on a semi-independent timeline
- Need to check in, answer questions, brainstorm, meet milestones
- Each deserves individual attention, my knowledge of their work
- I can't remember.
Summary

- Class management requires time management. The key takeaways are:
  - Do extensive course preparation to save time later (Handout #4)
  - Use technology where it helps, don’t where it doesn’t
  - Provide clear information to students
  - Find a calendaring solution that works for you
  - Make students responsible for some of their learning
  - Use rubrics, checklists, peer review, and other personal “hacks” to ease the burden of evaluation
Further Information

- Education Resources: Evidence Based Teaching Group Website: [https://med.und.edu/education-resources/evidence-teaching-group.html](https://med.und.edu/education-resources/evidence-teaching-group.html)
  - For more information about peer-facilitated threaded discussions: Locate August 2017 session: **A Threaded Discussion Strategy to Build Student Expertise**.
  - For more information about active learning strategies: Locate February 2018 session: **Active Learning Applied: Simple Strategies for Complex Content**.
  - For more information about rubrics: Locate May 2018: **What Does Assessment Look Like in Evidence-based Teaching**?

- I can help you solve your unique needs regarding course design, organization, efficiency, assessment, and more.
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  - **How Can Instructional Design Help You?** [https://med.und.edu/education-resources/instructional-design.html](https://med.und.edu/education-resources/instructional-design.html)