

How do I prepare for a class?

Module focus

- learning objectives
- lesson plans
- learning activities
- timing and sequence
- learning resources

Module outcomes

- you will be able to prepare for classes systematically
- you will be planning classes based on sound learning theory
- you will have a clear idea of what you want to achieve in each class
- your students will be clear about what the class is designed to achieve
- you will begin to build up a range of resources to support learning

'It is common for people new to teaching to be uncertain about what they need to do to be prepared for a class. Naturally, new and inexperienced teachers think about what has to be covered in a class. That is, they focus on the content. Yet sequencing and delivering this content is as important.'

Take a moment to reflect on this issue.

What challenges does this pose for *your* teaching?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Possible solutions

Being prepared means you know what you want to achieve and therefore your students know what needs to be achieved. Being prepared means you physically prepare the resources you need to support your teaching. Being prepared means you plan how you will sequence, manage, deliver and evaluate the learning activities.

Perhaps one of these ideas will appeal to you!

1. Try preparing a lesson plan for an upcoming topic
 - refer to the **Example lesson plan** and **Lesson plan template** at the end of this document
2. Try completing a checklist before a future class
 - refer to the **Class preparation checklist** at the end of this document

More help

Here are some resources from which you may seek some advice. They are all annotated so as to assist you in making judgements about what might be useful advice for your particular teaching context. By exploring some or all of these resources, you may well be able to generate strategies to suit your particular circumstances.

1. <http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/lesspln1.htm> - provides a very basic discussion of the 3 stages model of lesson planning.
2. <http://tip.psychology.org/cross.html> - is a basic discussion of the needs of adult learners.
3. <http://tip.psychology.org/knowles.html> - contains a brief discussion of the principles of meeting the needs of adult learners.
4. <http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/Teaching/flexible/learning.html#activities> - is a brief discussion of different types of learning activities and how they need to be linked to learning objectives.
5. <http://www.ala.asn.au/ace/Tutoring3.pdf> - page 8 contains a list of learning resources which may be used in class.
6. <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/Tutoring/study/aims/objective.htm> - a clearly explained rationale for why Tutors need to use or set learning objectives when preparing their classes.
7. http://www.cpd.mq.edu.au/induction/tl_curric.htm#1 – presents a brief explanation of the process of instructional design.
8. http://skillcity.iaaf.uwa.edu.au/data/docs/632483047778906250_semester_opener_4-05.doc - a sample lesson plan from SkillCity.
9. <http://www.scu.edu.au/services/tl/pathways/pathways06/pdfs/Pathways-3.pdf> - offers helpful suggestions for the typical generic stages you would include in a lesson plan.
10. <http://www.scu.edu.au/services/tl/pathways/pathways06/pdfs/Pathways-Appendices.pdf> - Appendix 13 on page A 85 contains a sample plan for a lecture in an Education faculty unit at Southern Cross University.
11. <http://www.scu.edu.au/services/tl/pathways/pathways06/pdfs/Pathways-Appendices.pdf> - Appendix 12 on page A81 contains a sample lesson plan for a class on 'Group Processes'.
12. http://adulthood.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=adulthood&cdn=education&tm=50&gps=446_1690_1012_604&f=00&su=p554.2.150.ip_&tt=2&bt=0&bts=1&zu=http%3A/www.peter-renner.com/lessonPlan.html - contains a model lesson plan template and a sample lesson plan for a 75 minute session on palliative care with health care workers.

Alert !

Being prepared for a class is a good idea. Feeling you must be locked into your plan step by step is not! Planning gives you a structure. Architects and engineers build flexibility into their designs!

Related topics

How do I write learning objectives?

Example lesson plan

Unit:	ABC101		Date:	27 July 2007
Topic:	The Communication Process		Text chapter(s):	4 & 5
Key concepts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication model • overcoming barriers • communication barriers 			
Learning objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to explain the communication process • to identify barriers to effective communication • to explain ways of improving the communication process • to demonstrate effective communication practice 			
Sequence of content:	Teaching activities:	Learning activities:	Resources required:	Time allocated
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrange table into a horseshoe shape • explain learning objectives to whole class • relate topic to last week's discussion of intercultural communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students arrange tables to sit in one horseshoe shape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 overhead transparency with learning objectives on it 	5 mins.
2. Communication Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show 3 different models • ask for student preferences • ask to justify choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students record models • students select and justify preferred model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 overhead transparencies: (i) generic model (ii) Shannon & Weaver model (iii) Berlo's model 	7-10 mins.
3. Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brainstorm things which interfere with communication • record list on blank overhead transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students contribute and record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blank overhead transparencies & pen 	5-8 mins.
4. Chinese Whispers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pass message verbally to first student in horseshoe • observe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students pass message around horseshoe • last student tells class the message received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overhead transparency with original message on it 	5 mins.
5. Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draw out reasons for message changing from original and suggestions for improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	5-8 mins.
6. Horseshoe Conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • display a conversation starter • ask first student in horseshoe to start a conversation with neighbour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each student must confirm understanding by giving feedback before continuing conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overhead transparencies of several conversation starters in case conversation stalls half way around horseshoe 	10 mins.
7. Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review learning objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students' questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overhead transparency 	3 mins
Reminders:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next week's topic and required pre-reading. • Assignment 1 due in 2 weeks. 			

Lesson plan template

Unit:		Date:		
Topic:		Text chapter(s):		
Key concepts:				
Learning objectives:				
Sequence of content:	Teaching activities:	Learning activities:	Resources required:	Time allocated
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
Reminders:				

Class preparation checklist

Unit:		Date:	
Topic:			
I have:		Notes:	
Read through the relevant textbook chapter	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Checked the Study Guide content for this topic	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Reviewed the lecture slides/notes for this topic	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Decided which key concepts I want to cover	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Clarified how this topic relates to other topics	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Listed my learning objectives using action verbs	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Designed my learning activities	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Allocated approximate times to activities	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Set some questions to guide general class discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Prepared my overheads or slides	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Photocopied my handouts	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Planned how the room will be arranged	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Planned a short activity in case we finish early	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Printed a list of student names	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Determined required reading for the next topic	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Checked on important dates coming up	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I must remember to:			