

The Fine Art of Teaching and Learning

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Editorial

Teaching and learning are very complicated. Most educators agree that a good educator has adequate knowledge of the subject matter and needs knowledge regarding pedagogy. Yet, a good educator's repertoire of skills and knowledge also includes interpersonal and inclusion skills. Each class has its unique challenges, its own personality. As a wise historian once told one of us, "never teach new material once. Each class is different; each class will give you a different understanding of the material and whether it is accessible to them." Indeed, the challenges of teaching are not just in mastering the material, but, simultaneously, in mastering how each group responds to material and how material has to be adapted for use in different situations.

Much of the literature on higher level thinking skills such as critical thinking indicates that students must interact with knowledge in some way in order to integrate it into their being, knowing and doing. As well, teaching and learning exist in a multitude of environments. To be an effective educator, it is also important to be literate about multimedia and be aware of the unique sources for learning differences that influence learner success. Educators need to have an intuitive ability to recognize and respond to how individuals learn differently, and creatively foster interest, value, and inclusion to be effective and facilitate learning. This is a formidable task, one that means an educator can never rely totally on lecture notes, a set of PowerPoint slides or a lesson plan to communicate an understanding of material and make knowledge accessible to all audiences.

This issue contains the experiences of post-secondary faculty in different organizations. The faculty describes their challenges dealing with complex students and learning environments both within the traditional classroom and outside. They discuss the influence of technology as well as the basics of forming relations with students.

We hope you enjoy reading about the experiences and are able to transfer the articles' insights to your own learning environments.

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