Student Panel - How I/We Like to Learn

Held January 19, 2012, Tenth Street Campus

QUESTIONS

1. At what moments in classes do you feel the most engaged?
2. At what moments are you the most distant from class?
3. What actions that instructors or classmates take in class do you find the most affirming or helpful?
4. What is not working or could be improved
5. What about your classes surprised you the most?

PANEL DISUSSION

1) At what moments in classes do you feel the most engaged?

When I:
- Relate to the topic
- Understand material
- Am engaged in class discussion or team work review
- Am interested
- Give a class presentation or get to watch a class presentation

When there is:
- Humour
- Different types of media, a variety to "change it up"
- Class discussions/group work
- Activities that give me hands on experience
- Clarity in directions, especially at the beginning when things are new and confusing. If I don't know what is going on, I tend to zone out.

When the teacher:
- Gives real life stories
- Engages us in questions, especially in the morning or after a long day
- Keeps the class involved, keeps students alert and makes material memorable

2) At what moments are you the most distant from class?

When I:
- Am tired, especially after a long day or in the morning
- Heavy course load makes me feel pulled in all directions
- When I have lots of my mind like deadlines

When there is:
- Not enough clear instructions
- Long powerpoints with no breaks
- Repetitive learning, when we go over things again and again

When the teacher:
- Talks for too long and doesn't engage us enough
- Is going through the material too fast/slow or talking too fast/slow (need to find the right pace)
- Isn't excited about the material he or she is teaching, monotone voice, their boredom shows and makes us bored. (need to make it exciting)

3) What actions that instructors or classmates take in class do you find the most affirming or helpful?

- The use of a variety of learning and technology tools
- When students help other students who are falling behind, we can learn a lot from each other and it gives us a chance to reaffirm what we know
- Open group discussion
- When the teacher gives examples of real life experiences as a way to relate to class and material
- Group review and student presentations
- When instructors "bring themselves to the job" and give us a sense of what the work field is like, and share their education stories.
- Class discussion forces us to dig deeper into our knowledge when we have to say it out loud. It's important that the teacher makes us feel comfortable/encourages us to have class discussion.

4) What is not working or could be improved"

- Need legitimate teacher evaluation earlier in the semester so that teachers can make the changes necessary.
- Moodle can be difficult, easier for distance courses, but more difficult for face to face
- Pace can make it hard to keep up, or can make class boring. Teacher needs to check in with students to ensure pace is working for students
- Clarity of timelines and due dates for projects
- Some teachers are knowledgeable in their field, but have no teaching background or teaching skills which make it difficult for students to learn.
- Need more explanation of what we are doing with projects and during class time, better understanding of expectations

5) What about your classes surprised you the most?

- Process Operator could have courses online with only shop time face to face
- Heavy course load
- I wasn't expecting that the Process Op program would have some online components
- Need feedback from employers in the region so we can see what other job options there are
- Pay attention to individual student progress, student may have untapped potential
- RHOT – course load was unbalanced, very heavy in first semester, light in second semester
- Teachers actually care and are easy to talk too, flexible to personal circumstances
- Post class average or list of grades (without names) so we can know where we stand in class
- Teacher access via email for feedback is a great support
- How personable teachers are and they genuinely care about our success which makes me motivated because I don't want to let him/her down.
- Need confident instructors so we can be confident students.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

Question 1: How can instructors better use technology?

- As a break during lectures, even a 10 second video clip makes a difference in breaking up a lecture and keeps us interested
- Instead of powerpoint, my instructor used Prezi, just to switch it up, made a big difference
- Utube videos are interesting

Question 2: How do you like using Forums?

- Students need to use the forums to make it valuable
- Make sure forums are lead or directed by an instructor
- Can be time consuming

Question 3: Is there too much technology in the classroom? What about BlackBerry or Androids in the classroom?

- I was overwhelmed with having to learn all the technology when I first started but I learned how to use it to my advantage and have accepted it. It's important to learn technology we will need to use in the workplace, like powerpoint.
- If the technology is related to the class, then it makes sense, otherwise it can be distracting. Example is App for dictionary, auto cad are useful.
- There needs to be a balance between learning technology that will be relevant to us in the working world, without affecting the quality of our education. As long as it doesn't take away from a classical education or deep learning.

Question 5: How can the Learning Support Centre help you to understand how to deal with your course load? For example, how to plan out a timeline for a project, instead of doing it last minute.

- I like it when a teacher keeps on me about a project, checks up on me.
- Teacher can set out a timeline, example "need to be at this point in your project, by this time" in order to help students schedule time. Putting dates in a daytimer with other appointments and to do items helps schedule projects.
- Let students know that help with study skills are available

Question 6: How long is too long for a lecture before we start to lose your attention?

- 20 before we need a little break, even a few minutes
- 45 minutes, but even if the teacher walks around the room rather than just standing at the front of the room makes a big difference in keeping our attention.

Question 7: What technology are we missing?

- I like moodle because all my class info is in one stop
- It's time consuming to check facebook, multiple emails and moodle

Question 8: Do you prefer online or face-to-face?

- All prefer face-to-face
- Online is good too, challenged me to learn on my own instead of relying on the teacher

Question 9: How can the School of Academic Upgrading and Development make it attractive for students to upgrade, refresh and get prepared before starting school?

- Just knowing what to expect from going to college would have been helpful. The program offered a lot of information that helped me get prepared, ex. what classes I was going to take and what was all involved. This extra information was the reason I chose Selkirk.
- Offer the course online for those students who are from out of town, a quick fresher/condensed version.
- Put the information on the main page because it's hard to find, I didn't know about it. Really broadcast the information.
- Advertize in high schools to bring awareness because it's a good course to take

Question 10: How can we make online courses more personal?

- Video tape the lecture and put it online
- Set up a one-on-one meeting with each student, just to check in and see how things are going