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TWT REFLECTIVE PORTFOLIO

1. Define your teaching philosophy.

My teaching philosophy is to unlock our students' motivation so that they channel it to reaching their full potential. My role is to enable them to discover their innate capabilities, build new skills, develop confidence in their competence, lead them to embrace the challenges of a rigorous and competitive environment, as well as ultimately direct them to maximize their contribution to industry and mankind. I aspire to facilitate their transformation from assertive hopefuls to performing professionals balanced by rewarding personal lives.

In my twenty years as an international banker and fourteen years as an educator, I have observed that students learn best by applying the principles taken up in class to external, practical, personal, and industrial use. This is why among the first steps I undertook as an FIT faculty member is to reinforce the department's advisory board with members committed to fulfilling their mission and seek input from other faculty and the students themselves on the resources needed to propel them to achieving their goals. The Advisory Board members are doers and enablers rather than simply advisors, attributes we hope our students also acquire. There are signs that this initiative is succeeding as our graduates have gone on to become senior industry shapers and have returned to help build ITM's curriculum and teach the next generation of international traders.

While it is indeed important to provide students with technical skills, such capabilities may be more important in the earlier stages of their professional lives. To pursue a successful long-term career in international trade and marketing, our students would also need to communicate powerfully, develop a global perspective, approach challenges professionally, think critically to effectively solve problems and wisely make decisions, efficiently manage projects, as well as act morally, professionally, and ethically within and across multi-cultural teams. This is why ITM courses, lectures, and activities have been designed to provide direct relevance to building such transferrable skills in conjunction with their Liberal Arts courses.

As important to the process as a learning tool is the thoughtful approach to assessment since this instrument measures how closely the learning outcomes have been met. I believe that providing feedback constructively and in a manner that assessors would like to receive it themselves would best lead to positive steps taken to accelerate the learning moment. Further, connecting the strengths and areas for further reinforcement with attaining the students' goals is the most effective means to convey the suggestions.

Because I believe that learning opportunities emerge in almost any undertaking, students are encouraged to reflect on ways in which they can learn about themselves in almost any task, whether it be in class or outside, and to connect their findings with their ultimate goals outside. For example, students are encouraged to prioritize joining clubs and volunteer for charities so that they can connect the experiences and networking opportunities to their personal and professional growth, realizing that social interaction is as valuable as formal classroom learning can be. While such relationships can develop through dealings in person, they can also be expedited conscientiously through social media.

I also believe that fostering a partnership with students throughout their education even after they graduate from the program leads to further learning. For instance, when asked to provide a reference to support their application for a position or graduate school, we work together on crafting the letter of recommendation. We jointly introspect on their contribution to the success of the class, the program, school, college, and community as a starting point for helping them to connect their objectives with the goals of the position for which they are applying or further studies they wish to pursue. We collectively link their past with their present and future by bringing to light their accomplishments through actions they have taken. By the end of the exercise, students have learned a great deal more about themselves while gaining the confidence that they indeed continue to benefit from the support of an ally who has their own best interest at heart.

I apply the same principles to incoming new and current faculty, many of whom might more readily respond to offer of support than direction.

2. Have you ever observed a master teacher? If the answer is yes, what do you recall most from the experience?

Yes, I indeed observed master teachers, who most impressed upon me the student learning pyramid, ranking one-way lectures as the least effective teaching method while application and presentation of the students' understanding of the lessons as being most successful in driving results. They posited that students remember only 5% of what we say and 100% of what they say and do.

Thus, I have applied that principle in every class I have been teaching since then as well as in mentoring new faculty. I have structured face-to-face classes by devoting the first half to interactive lectures by connecting recent news to our topics, then tapping into the students' intuitive understanding of the concepts before getting into the lesson proper to assure them that they intuitively already have a connection with the subject matter. Then, we take up industry workshops, case studies, or comprehensive discussions applying the main topics that day to drive home their practical relevance. Application of these concepts is then elevated further into a comprehensive term project.

A similar format is being used in online classes, which combine mini-lectures containing links to news articles and videos in class as well as group discussions. The participants are further challenged by being required to cite additional external sources to intensify their responses to their classmates' entries. Project leaders assign individual roles to deepen group discussions with the help of an embedded librarian, the Writing Studio, and Academic Skills Center as additional resources boost their learning and productivity.

3. Give a examples of your most successful lesson. Why do you feel it was successful?

While all of my classes usually start with a recap of the week's newsworthy events, in the International Business Transactions class, we take a step further by applying our lessons to an international negotiations simulation project. I divide the class into three importing companies and three exporting companies and provide them with pertinent information that the other teams have to uncover so that they can negotiate the best contract(s) for their company. The teams plan their strategy, build relationships with the companies, exchange information, and persuade their counterparties to reach a mutually beneficial agreement. At the end of the negotiations after the contracts are signed, the companies are provided with scoring sheets to measure how well they did. They then grade each team member for the negotiations portion of the project and explain the basis of the grade, indicate how they applied the lessons, and reflect on the lessons gained from the exercise. Since not all of the teams are able to conclude contracts, this comes closest to having a real world experience in applying their lessons.

Another example of a successful lesson is in applying concepts in the International Management class through a term project, which begins with a discussion on how to work with multi-cultural teams prior to undertaking the project. I allocate the project assignment in phases according to each learning unit, so that the team leaders appoint individual roles to their members. To correctly apply the concepts in the mini-lectures and pursue relevant research, the students submit their initial class discussion entry on a different topic and await my feedback prior to moving on to the project. In the end, the team concludes a PowerPoint presentation containing the basic research and an essay proposing detailed courses of action on the company being researched while considering the timeline, resources, and cost/reward analysis of the findings. At least one student has used this method to win business deals in industry.

4. Do you have an example of an unsuccessful lesson? How did you address the challenges?

Yes, when I initially taught International Finance, I taught the foreign exchange calculation, hedging, and cash management concepts as I myself had learned them in school. However, I quickly found out that the class I was teaching needed more tangible examples to help connect them to practical use.

By voluntarily encouraging the participants to provide frank feedback through surveys on how the class can be improved at the end of each lesson, I was able to uncover the barriers to their learning. I addressed the issues early in the next sessions, engaging the students in visual learning aided by tools made accessible by the Center for Excellence in Teaching. This resource enabled me to provide students with different methods of presenting the same lesson so that they could identify with the approach that best suited their learning styles. I also prepared scripts and recorded Impatica PowerPoints to add a listening dimension to the visuals provided.

5. Why are you introducing and/or expanding the use of technology into your teaching?

As technology evolves and our students get younger as well as more accustomed to technology as a learning tool, it is incumbent upon me, as their instructor and mentor to new faculty, to be up-to-date, even ahead, of the curve. My students have demonstrated that education accessed through their mobile phones, evolving technology, and different learning tools can be very effective in enhancing their comprehension of course materials.

Since I currently use Blackboard, PowerPoint, Impatica Voiced Over PowerPoint, Email, Facetime, Google Drive, Clickers, Excel, Word, Adobe, and internet sites to reach them, I believe that supplementing delivery of the course content through more modern tools like Lynda.com, Camptasia, Apps, and other such emerging technology can help them visualize and apply the lessons more effectively. I am committed to getting more proficient with these tools for both face-to-face and online classes with the support of CET and FIT's other resources.

Also, as the roads to other countries in this increasingly globalizing world are being bridged through advances in transportation and communication, I believe that education needs to be at the forefront of leading and adapting to these evolving learning tools to better prepare our students for the mounting challenges anticipated following graduation. As a result, in one of my classes, through SUNY's Coil (Collaborative Online International Learning) network, I am trying out a partnership with a marketing class conducted through a university in Colombia. In this collaboration, our students in New York will have the opportunity to apply their international business transactions lessons by trading a chosen commodity or merchandise with students in Cartagena. Noting the partner's cultural and technical requirements, I am enlisting the expertise of the Office of Online Learning and Academic Technologies to use Moodle, the university's electronic learning system, as the instrument to be used for this purpose. Because other challenges, such as different language, background, and strategic goals, can affect the outcome of the project results, mastering this portion of the tie up is key to ensuring that the learning process is prepared as thoroughly and issues anticipated as much as possible.

6. How do you feel these technology innovations will affect the student experience? How do you think it will affect your experience?

I believe that applying new technology as a means to convey our lessons would enhance our students' real world experience while at the College and help to achieve FIT's goal of achieving academic and creative excellence by building "an environment that promotes creativity and experimentation and diverse experiential learning". It would also make them more receptive to grasping the new concepts more tangibly so that they can more easily connect the lessons to achieving their professional goals.

For example, our students might more quickly master our lesson on foreign exchange options hedging by viewing a Blackboard video that they can download to their mobile devices. I hope to work closely with CET, the Offices of Online Learning and Academic Technology, and Information Technology in developing these learning tools.

I also expect that these technology innovations will encourage students to take greater responsibility for their work. For example, by encouraging students to examine their essays through Safe Assign on Blackboard, they may be able to detect if their text is original, can be more reliable by citing a source, or can benefit from amending it more significantly.

7. Please describe new teaching ideas you plan to implement as a result of this technology certificate program.

I plan to use:

- Lynda.com for tutorials on international management,
- Moodle for an international trading simulation of my international business transactions class with marketing students at a university in Colombia,
- Camptasia or additional voiced over PowerPoints for complex calculations and concepts,
- Voicethread or similar technology to welcome students, new faculty, and foster a closer program community,
- Flipped/reverse classroom to engage the face to face students more at the same level as the online classes,
- Safe Assign to empower students to see for themselves if they should cite their sources,
- Digital Syllabus to ensure standardization of general information of FIT's policies included in syllabi while customizing them according to the course's and program's specifications

These tools are examples of ways in which I can transform my classes into 21<sup>st</sup> century formats so that the course and program content are delivered more effectively. With the support of FIT's and external resources, I look forward to gradually implementing them.

8. How will these new technology tools/approaches contribute to your classroom practice?

Applying these new technology tools would enrich the students' classroom experience by appealing to the students' comfort zone and providing a different learning form that serves to make particular lessons stand out. For example, when I use Clickers for the lesson on cash flow accounting, the students are keenly interested and more quickly grasp the material on what otherwise could be more challenging to comprehend. I also noticed this effect when I use the Jeopardy game to review our lessons. These tools tend to elicit close to 100% participation in the discussions.

Thus, in encouraging the students to learn through tools that are more native to them, my classroom experience would deepen so that more time is spent going further into the course material than learning the basics themselves. They help to keep the students engrossed in complex and multifaceted deliberations, helping them to optimize their learning experience.

9. How will you evaluate the success of your activities?

I will be able to measure success when there is increased participation in discussions and the students' contributions become more significantly substantiated by well researched materials. I expect their inputs to more directly correlate to the lessons and their applications and become more receptive to the resources that can help them develop as professionals. For example, they may be keener to visit the Writing Studio earlier to strategize the writing of their essays because they understand the lessons and related tasks more quickly.

Though more directly correlated to the success of the program, we can also monitor, as indirect methods, the exit surveys and assessments that senior level students fill out to determine if there is a perceived appreciation for the approaches taken to hasten their absorption of the lessons.

10. What do you consider to be the bigger picture items with regard to technology and learning?

The bigger picture with regard to technology and learning involves the evolution of industry and the way people are expected to live in the future. For the past year, I have attended discussions and presentations about "Smart Cities", wherein technology is being used to harness intelligence and the internet to manage the resources of urban areas, where populations are expected to grow much more quickly than in the rural areas. So, we can imagine more widespread application of technology, for example, to examining where used water flows so that it can be redirected and recycled for productive use. This could solve basic water shortage problems in countries like India.

As applied to our industry, prescient planners imagine driverless cars, making parking lots less relevant and creating the possibility that those highly valued spaces will be converted to commercial use. In terms of logistics, the role of shipping and trucking may be tempered by implementation of drones, which bode tremendous implications in international trade.

This is just the beginning. There are reports that the world is now using less cash and more electronic payment methods. In some cases, people have not touched cash for days and some others have never used it to settle accounts.

Thus, it is incumbent upon us, as educators, to learn the implications of these changes and instill in our students the best practices for thriving in a transforming business environment. I hope that we are able to continue to nurture their awareness and actions for the good that they can bring to improving lives globally through their professional undertakings.