



VERA SHANOV – AMC DEPT – JULY 2020
REFLECTIVE TEACHING PORTFOLIO

1. Define your teaching philosophy.

To tell you about my teaching philosophy, I need to give a brief background of my work history.

For the past 40 years, I have worked in the Marketing arena on a variety of Fortune 500 Brands, such as Smirnoff vodka, Lipton iced tea, Good Season salad dressing, PGA Tour, etc.

I have an MBA in Marketing - no degree in Education.

I have worked for the past 20 years at FIT-SUNY as an Adjunct, ONLY teaching in the Fall Semester. (In the Spring semester, my husband (PHD in Computers) and I do pro bono projects internationally.) As a result, I have JUST received my CCE last semester ... the Chairman of my AMC Department, Al Romano, jokes that I took the LONGEST time of ANYONE to get my CCE!

I have been teaching Marketing at FIT because: I LOVE Marketing and I LOVE to teach. Having no official training in education, my philosophy is simple:

a) I always ask for the Freshman Class and teach the Intro to Marketing section. I do this because most incoming Freshman are a little unsure of themselves, and I love to instill confidence in them, as well as share my love of marketing. I try VERY HARD to always find a "RIGHT" portion of the answer when students contribute in class, because I remember from firsthand experience (in my high school English literature class when the teacher snapped that my answer was incorrect, and I didn't contribute for the rest of the semester) how demoralizing criticism can be.

b) I am an "active" and "animated" teacher. I walk around the classroom. I modulate my voice. I call on students. I treat them like adults. I engage them, so they are never bored. At the start of my semester, I tell the students, THEIR job is to show up and be prepared to participate...MY job is to make the class interesting for them.

c) I want to teach them WHY Marketing is important...because in four years, when they graduate and are interviewing for their dream job, they will be marketing the most important thing -- themselves. And to this end, I relate everything in class to real world examples. (When

they do homework assignments, presentation of their materials is key...just like in the real world, when they present their work to their bosses...neatness, spelling, creativity and obviously content ... count. In class they earn a grade, in "real life", they get a promotion, salary increase, etc. In my class, I aim to prepare them for the REAL WORLD.

d) Yes, they learn terminology and marketing concepts in my class. But I use current examples (through current commercials, current new product launches - think Uber vs the Edsel - things they can relate to). I strive to make learning FUN - through interactive assignments, group work, etc. Yes, they will work hard in my class, but will have fun doing it. (I see no reason why they cannot do both!)

e) I give students LOTS of opportunities to EARN their grade: two quizzes, two homework assignments, a midterm, and a final, that test not only their understanding of terminology and how to apply it, but also their writing skills, and presentation skills -- all abilities that are instrumental to a successful career in marketing.

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

I have been fortunate to have had several SUPER teachers throughout my life:

a) SAM MARATEK and HENRY MULLISH

My undergraduate major at NYU was Computer Science. These two professors took a dry subject and made it interesting. It was actually FUN to go to their class!

b) JOHN CZEPIEL

For my MBA in Marketing at NYU, it was this professor who instilled my love of marketing. By bringing lots of real-world examples, it was because of him that I pursued my lifelong career in marketing.

c) DAVID DARLING

Music is a hobby of mine, and this Grammy Award winning cellist was instrumental in humanistic teaching. According to him, there are NO WRONG NOTES. I carry this concept forward in that there are NO WRONG OPINIONS in my marketing class. It enables students to speak up and gain confidence in their presentations.

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

Some of my most successful lessons revolve around TEACHING a concept, and then having the students actually CREATE examples of the concept:

a) MARKETING OBJECTIVES

I outline what comprises a successful objective. Each student takes a few minutes to write an objective of their own, for whatever product they desire. We then go around the room, and each student reads their objective and we evaluate if there is anything missing from their objective

b) MARKETING SLOGANS

I break the students into groups of 3 (that I create...because in the REAL WORLD, you must work with whatever co-workers the boss assigns to you!). I then give them a situation where they are the advertising team that needs to come up with a slogan for a company. I give them tips on how they can work as a team. At the end of XX minutes, they have to choose three of their slogans (I give them tips on how to make this selection) and each person in the group has to present one slogan and discuss how they came up with it.

c) WHAT'S NEW

Each week, every student needs to bring to class a What's New article. A new product, a new advertising campaign -- anything THEY find interesting. I cold call on students (so they learn very quickly they need to bring in an article!). I start the class in this manner because it ALWAYS stimulates discussion that I relate to concepts taught in class. It gets the students talking, contributing, and vocalizing their opinions. A great start to a class.

All the above examples were successful learning techniques because they were put into PRACTICAL ACTION versus just being a theory they learned in class.

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

Unfortunately, yes, there have been some unsuccessful lessons.... but FORTUNATELY, I have been able to learn from them! Each year, I religiously review my student evaluations and strive to improve.

a) TEACHING TOO FAST

The amount of material that an Intro class has to cover, is, quite frankly, A LOT! There are more chapters than weeks to teach them. I PUSHED THROUGH to get the material "taught" without querying if the students were "getting it". (The glazed looks should have warned me, but heck, I had material to cover!).

Now, I make the determination what the KEY material is in each chapter and THAT is what I cover in my PowerPoint lectures. This gives me the time to stop and question the students to make sure they understand. Also, every week, I REVIEW key material from the previous week (via student questions) to make sure the material was understood

b) GRADING CRITERIA

One of the most frequent student criticisms of me, was they did not understand why they got the grade they did on homeworks or essays. They thought I was unfair and a hard grader. OK, YES, I am a hard grader, you must EARN your grade. But I realized that if they did not fully understand what constituted a good grade, they DID have a point! (I thought I had outlined what I was looking for in a paper, but apparently not enough!)

HURRAY for RUBRICS! Remember, I never had any formal "education" training, so until a fellow professor mentioned what she did in her class (Thank you Lynda Johnson of the AMC Dept!), I was clearly able to delineate how many points were given for what criteria. I always welcomed the Peer Evaluations of my fellow AMC professors, from whom I learned A LOT, because they were true educators!

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

At the risk of sounding arrogant (and anyone who has ever met me would say I do not have an arrogant bone in my body!), I thought I was a pretty good teacher! I got good student reviews and peer reviews. What did I have to learn?

As it turns out...PLENTY!!! If it wasn't for COVID, and the possibility of online teaching in the Fall of 2020 (remember, I only TEACH in the Fall....so I wasn't teaching during the disastrous Spring 2020 coronavirus semester!), I never would have even TAKEN this technology course. But I wanted to be prepared in case we DID have to teach online, and thank goodness I had the summer to learn.

In prior Fall semesters, I only used Blackboard to load my syllabus, because it was required. I printed it out and distributed and reviewed the syllabus the first day of class. THAT was the extent of technology use in my class. I now have learned so many new techniques that I am eager to use this coming Fall. (see below)

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

For the students, I expect to increase their opportunity to test their knowledge. Also, to experience more information on the computer (versus in person). Students are used to being on the computer, so they will relish getting more information this way. I hope to give them a better pedagogical experience!

As for myself, it will be WAY more work. But then again, anytime teaching a new course, you have the startup curve. I am only happy that I have the summer to do this work. KUDOS to everyone that had to ramp up in just two weeks this spring due to COVID!

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

So, let us start in order that the students will experience my newly found skills:

a) I will develop a Welcome Video, speaking briefly about who I am and what/how they will be learning this Fall semester. It gives me an opportunity to show my personality and ease the students' worries as they enter their freshmen year. I will email this video (using Blackboard) to students about two weeks before Fall semester starts.

b) One week before semester starts, I will email them a link to an introduction to Blackboard video, so that they can be facile with the technology on their first day back. In this email, I will direct them to the Syllabus that will be ON Blackboard, which indicates the textbook required along with WHAT we will be doing the first day of class

c) On the first day, I will prepare an Icebreaker, possibly a Padlet where they upload their photo, indicate where they are from and what their most creative thing, they did to stay sane this summer during COVID, etc. Thus, while students are "entering" the digital classroom (I believe we are teaching remotely in the Fall), it gives them a chance to "meet" each other.

d) Since most of my teaching is in lecture PowerPoint format, I am seriously thinking of recording my lectures in Voice Thread in various modules. This way, the students can listen to the lectures asynchronously and make notes or add questions right on the PowerPoints. In synchronous class, I can use the time to answer their questions, and break the students up into groups to do exercises to support the lecture work.

e) I will load the homeworks, quizzes, midterm and final onto Blackboard. I will grade these assessments through Blackboard and use the automatic grading system to provide instant grades to the students.

f) I will work with Connect from McGraw Hill to develop various assessments, use video cases and activities to keep the students engaged throughout their synchronous and asynchronous times.

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

First of all, and make no bones about it.... this will at least DOUBLE my workload (e.g. instead of just delivering the lecture in person class, I have to record it, and then review it one more time in class, answering any student questions). However, I realize these are trying times and I TRULY want to make the learning experience the BEST THAT IT CAN BE for students while we have to teach remotely.

Having said that, this gives the synchronous class time opportunity to have more group work with the students -- something I think they will benefit from....and hopefully learn more.

As for grading, the Blackboard process should make it easier for me. I don't have to LUG home papers, etc. and can just grade online and instantaneously calculate their grade point average to date.

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

The success of all the above will be in the improved comprehension and hopefully better grades of the students. When I teach in person, I can SEE the comprehension, interest in the students' eyes. It will be a lot harder for me to judge their interest online, so I will be sure to include a lot more polls, group work etc.

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

As for BIG PICTURE, let's face it, technology is the way of the future -- COVID just gave me the REASON and IMPETUS to do it. (I guess there IS an upside to the coronavirus!). It has increased my pedagogical skills, and for that I am grateful. WELCOME to the 21st century!!