

## **Teaching Innovations to Enhance Student Learning**

The materials shared in this column were evidences of learning which illustrate the authentic learning process of teacher training.

“Professional Development” has been a widely researched phenomenon in social science (e.g., Guskey, 2002; Speck & Knipe, 2005). Studies of the professional development of teachers have drawn scholarly attention from educators. Teacher professional development is now defined as processes through which a teacher acquires the skills and knowledge he/she needs to advance in his/her career (Guskey, 2002). Prospective teachers learn from their preparation and training programme which is regarded as part of professional development. Teacher training, teacher education and preparation, whichever forms it may take for preparing a teacher is crucial for learning to be good teachers.

With application of IT, roles of teaching and learning are no longer solely transferring and receiving knowledge respectively. Learning is switching from teacher-centered to learner-centered. Many theories blend with technology to promote learner-centered learning approaches and active learning.

This platform will give you an overview of the definition of teaching innovation, it also shows you some innovative practices developed by prospective teachers and student-teachers who study at the post-graduate levels.

### **Definition and Concept of Teaching Innovations**

‘Inventing’ is ‘creating’ and ‘innovation’ is valuing, introducing, and using ‘invention’ (Banker, 1995). Innovations can be understood as new discoveries and applications of novel ideas, skills and technology in managing day to day practice or performing specific skilled procedures for operation, production, management, training, education and development, which may lead to gains and benefits in terms of outcomes and performance.

Regarding teaching innovations, we used to refer to the application of technology in enhancing teaching effectiveness.

Although IT does change the interaction model and create multi-dimensional space of learning for students, the meaning of innovative teaching implies bringing out newer learning method through teaching materials, course and classroom design. Teaching innovation will affect the teaching and learning of teacher and student, interaction and the content of learning.

Innovative teaching refers to teachers in imparting knowledge and skills in teaching students to learn while promoting innovation. It not only refers to creatively mobilize students' intellectual factors, non-intellectual factors in the process of identifying, analyzing and solving problems, but also refers to shape students' creative personality and develop students' creative thinking, granting them innovative skills. Innovation and personality have a high correlation. Rich curiosity is typical feature of innovative personality; meanwhile, enthusiasm, sense of humor, sense of responsibility, courage to persevere, self-confidence, independence and hard work are excellent qualities of innovative personality. People with innovative personality are self-conscious and their works are meticulous (Wang, 2002).

This section shares a volume of post-graduate as well as student-teachers' lesson plan materials. These lesson plans adopted innovative strategies and were selected based on a set of criteria of assessing innovative teaching. Some of the materials were piloted-tested through the student-teachers' practicum in schools, and their lesson plans were appended with post-supervision reflection of the students. The others were guided by a process of study in a course which encourage innovative strategies and effective teaching strategies to support student learning of the twenty-first century.

The supervisor used pre- and post-supervision dialogue, reflective dialogue and formative feedback as an essential tool during the supervision and instruction, by introducing reflective prompts in supervising and teaching the students. The prompts include a set of questions which requires students to critically review on the aspects which they think that they have conducted effectively, the areas that they find problematic or still have room for improvement, and issues or potential ideas that they could further explore. Based on which, suggestions and recommendations were communicated / discussed, and students revised their lesson plans to address the pertinent issues. The lesson plans also show originality and novelty in making teaching innovations. In each of the plans, the authors focused on broadening the objectives of learning, widening the scope of learning and resources of learning, by providing a resourceful and authentic environment to enhance student motivation and engagement. The element of using IT to facilitate learning serves as an essential component in these lesson plans.

The materials shared in this column were evidences of learning which illustrate the authentic learning process of teacher training. This platform has also become an on-going dissemination platform that publishes high quality lesson plans. If you are students and short of ideas of writing a lesson plan, or you are teacher educators who are involved in mentoring and supervising students, you may be interested in viewing the reflective episodes in this open access platform. If you have any comments and works to share, please email contact AClass at [aclass@ied.edu.hk](mailto:aclass@ied.edu.hk).

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