

WSU College of Arts and Sciences
Department of XYZ
Teaching Observation

Instructor: Dr. "A. Teacher"
Observer: Dr. "An. Observer"

Class: XXX 101: Introduction to [REDACTED]
Date: Monday, March 16, 2015

Introduction: During our pre-observation meeting, we discussed the syllabus and other considerations including the size of the class and how that might impact the final project which breaks up into smaller groups. The course has 90 students and is taught in a large lecture-style theater with fixed seating unable to be moved. My visit was 2 days prior to the midterm examination.

Content Knowledge: The instructor is an expert in the content area covered in this course. He is extremely knowledgeable and was able to share the information in a very comprehensive and concise manner for a UCORE 100-level course. He has a great deal of experience in the field and was able to relate his own real-world experiences which were obviously of interest and intrigue to the students.

Design of the Course/Lesson: The syllabus is very clear and complete, explaining policies, expectations, requirements, grading practice, homework assignments, preparation/participation, quizzes, and final project explanations. This syllabus follows the requirements of the University and certainly a wonderful example for the UCORE courses. The design of the lesson was very relevant with clear goals and assessment opportunities throughout the class. While the dissemination of information was via lecture, it was delivered in a manner that felt more like explanations and relational experiences. At the beginning of class, he handed out materials/past assignments and did a "check-in" with the students regarding their upcoming project. He offered many explanations and also tried to relate the information to their own interests and experiences/knowledge that they possess. He encouraged engagement through questions, discussion, and inclusion and drew upon past discussions to build upon. At the conclusion of the class, he discussed the plans for their next class period and handed out a study guide indicating they would review the next day for the exam so students should be prepared with questions. The course, as seen through the syllabus and this specific class period, is well developed.

Instructional Strategies: Concepts were supported by definitions, diagrams, and examples and he drew on terminology frequently used by students to draw them in and to relate material to their own experiences. The instructor was able to mediate discussion, encourage feedback within an effective pace of delivering the materials, use technology with great ease, give clear directions, and assist the students with immediate needs as well as with preparation for midterm examinations and their projects.

Presentation Skills: Dr. "Teacher" is quite comfortable in front of the class. His voice is generally audible and easy to understand, allowing for variation of tone and pitch for interest and emphasis. There were times when students were chatting between themselves and he spoke over that while continuing his presentation, making it hard to hear what he was saying. At our post-observation meeting, we discussed strategies he could incorporate to quiet them down so everyone can hear when he was talking without stifling their open environment of participation. He maintained comfortable eye contact with the students and used the PowerPoint slides to guide him through the class period, never "reading" lecture notes, but delivering the material with ease, efficiency and effectiveness. He is quite obviously enthusiastic about the subject material and seems to inspire interest of the students.

Student Engagement/Rapport with Students: This was a very relaxed environment, allowing for freedom of expression without fear of saying the wrong thing yet extremely productive and efficient in use of time and in terms of focus. There were many found opportunities for humor, engagement,

attention to the students as individuals, and questions. He seemed sincerely interested in them and conversed with them both before and after class as they arrived and left.

Overall: I was able to observe an excellent teacher who knows and is enthusiastic about the subject/material, as demonstrated through his presentation, is responsive to the needs of the students, and organized both in the syllabus and in the classroom while demonstrating sincere interest in the students and in their learning.

Signed: Dr. An Observer

Dated: March 30

WSU College of Arts and Sciences
Department XYZ
Teaching Observation: Sample 2

Instructor: Dr. "A. Teacher" Class: Individual Studio
Observer: Dr. "An Observer" Date: Monday, April 13, 2015

Introduction: At the pre-observation meeting, Dr. "An Instructor" and I discussed that I would be observing an individual studio lesson of her teaching a student who is a junior in the program. There is a syllabus that each private student receives for studio lessons regarding schedule, grading, expectations, goals, and work ethic. However, because of the individualized nature of lessons and the need to assess at each lesson the particular needs and objectives, the instructor will be asking the student questions to self-assess and assist in the direction of the lesson for the day. In this process, very common for studio teachers, the student will be able to help assess on what he needs more assistance and the level of his preparation for the semester and for the upcoming performance/juried exam (a benchmark upper division qualifying exam) in 3 weeks. During the studio lesson, the instructor would then individually construct the plan for executing a successful and individualized lesson.

Content Knowledge: During the lesson, the instructor was at great ease, often asking the student for feedback, drawing attention to a focused teaching approach with the student. She demonstrated exceptional understanding of the content, pedagogy, and its application to his personal development and to the goals obviously well-established at the beginning of the semester.

Design of Course/Lesson: It is the nature of private lessons that each lesson be designed individually. Given these are weekly lessons, many things can affect a student's ability to practice throughout the week and to fully participate in the lesson with a teacher. These can include illness, emotional situations, absent accompanist, musical selection that may need to be reviewed from weeks before, a new selection that needs more work in any particular area including articulation, breath management, resonance, phrasing and other musical details. The instructor was very efficient in assessing the needs of the student for this particular lesson, developing a plan and goals for each musical selection which seemed to fall in line with developmental progress throughout the semester. The lesson plan was relevant, reflected current practice in the area, was level-appropriate, efficient and effective in use of time, and learning objectives were clear with specific activities towards the goals.

Instructional Strategies: The instructor incorporated material from other courses this student has had in our program including theory, history, pedagogy, and conducting. She led the student to "discovery" in applying theory, musicianship, and pedagogy, and asked "why do you think..." about various elements in the lesson. One-on-one, you can tell that she is very responsive to visual and aural feedback responses from the student and assists with expanding on or trying a new idea. She was able to remain an active listener, stopping at times to say "if you could do this over, what would you do" in a strong effort to develop self-assessment of the student, reinforcing the need to be thoughtful in applying what he knows rather than always being told. However, when needed, she helped to lead the student and also utilized learning tools. Her assessment was always very in touch with what was needed to be addressed and she was kind, instructional, and encouraging of the student, offering compliments as well as constructive ideas for improvement. This approach involving immediate assessment/feedback, applying the new knowledge or reminder, and then reassessment with student input was extremely effective and was a very efficient process. "What did you like?" and "What would you go back and fix?" are both motivating for the students to be invested and involved in their own vocal growth, guided by her depth of knowledge and experience.

Presentation Skills: The instructor is very comfortable in the one-on-one setting. Her eye contact with the student was genuine, encouraging, and kind. The variation of pitch/tone used throughout the lesson modeled excellent exemplification, expressing enthusiasm, encouragement, and interest. She had many resources available to share with the student when needed but as an experienced teacher, there was an obvious trust between student and instructor. She spoke with clarity and would check in with the student to ensure he understood and was able to put the instructions to practice.

Student Engagement/Rapport with Students: This was a very relaxed environment, allowing for freedom of expression without fear of saying the wrong thing yet extremely productive and efficient in use of time and in terms of focus (always on task with purpose but at a pace that felt very natural and not frantic nor wasteful). The attention was specifically on the student as an individual, and to help put him at ease, there were opportunities for laughter within a positive and trusting atmosphere. She effectively nurtured the needs of the student and assisted him in ways to continue self-assessment and improvement throughout the week, whether it was in the improvisatory nature or simply correction of musical notes. The importance of asking the student questions to hear what they may reflect on was obviously so very effective in training students to be able to assess not only their own skills but also those of others, given we are teaching our students how to be excellent teachers.

Overall: Dr. "Teacher" is extremely gifted as a musician and one of the most effective teachers I have seen in this setting. Through my observing today, I was able to acquire some new ideas for my own teaching, and certainly found her work with an individual student to be quite inspirational, positive, and productive.

Signed: Dr. An Observer

Dated: April 24, 2015

WSU College of Arts and Sciences
Department of XYZ
Teaching Observation: Sample 3

Instructor: Dr. "A. Teacher"
Observer: Dr. "An Observer"

Class: XXX 300
Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Introduction: This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00pm-1:15pm. The classroom has fixed seats that do not turn, making it difficult for small group discussions, which the instructor does throughout the class, but its stadium style seating does make for easier viewing of and by the instructor and for students to see the instructor. A large screen and computer for presentations are installed in the room. The room has a very noisy air-flow register that affects the back third of the seats in the classroom, where I happened to sit. Another room assigned for this class would likely be a better option for the amount of student involvement with discussion groups and for ease of the instructor and teaching assistant to engage with the students. At our pre-observation meeting we discussed his concern that students do not come to class prepared for classroom discussions and what he had been instituting this semester to motivate this behavioral change.

Content Knowledge: Dr. "Teacher" is clearly knowledgeable regarding the content matter and related his own experiences into the classroom presentation to provide context and intrigue. I could see how the students were drawn in to his stories and explanations.

Design of the Course/Lesson: The syllabus clearly states expectations and goals, participation, assignments and grading, and topics and reading assignments for each class throughout the semester. Today's topic was on schedule, according to the syllabus, and given it is an upper division course for majors, the level of material in this course and the specific topic of today's lesson were appropriate. At the beginning of the class, the instructor provided a review of the last class in setting up the topic for today. Specific questions posed for today's class were available on Angel 2 days prior to class to help prepare them for discussion. Throughout the class, PowerPoint slides helped highlight key ideas and guide the presentation with the incorporation of small discussion groups to provide the application of theories and then bring the students back to focus on the instructor. Class time seemed to be used very efficiently.

Instructional Strategies: The instructor utilized many strategies to introduce and highlight material including questions available prior to class on Angel, a clear syllabus that indicated preparation for that day, materials to download from their classroom space on Angel, PowerPoint slides to highlight key ideas, YouTube videos, slides to guide the presentation rather than reading from notes, personal experiences and contemporary context for understanding and applying theories, and small discussion groups with time for them to report to the class. Directions were very clear but some students seemed to be quite unprepared. Therefore, he provided guidance in a manner that would help them remain engaged even under those circumstances.

Presentation Skills: Dr. "Teacher" has a very clear and audible voice for a large class of this size and was very personable, providing good eye contact, encouraging facial expressions, moving around and not stuck behind a podium or the computer, asking questions, and assisting with context for applying the theories to their own lives. The atmosphere was comfortable and the pace was appropriate; even in small group discussions, he was able to add guidance to keep the pace moving. When students asked

questions or shared their small group report with the class, it would likely be beneficial in this room for the instructor to restate questions and comments as it was difficult to hear the more soft-spoken students at the front of the room from where I was sitting in the back 1/3 of the room.

Student Engagement/Rapport with Students: The instructor was engaging in his presentation and included several opportunities for student discussion and presentation of their ideas. There were several items that I noticed: many students did not come prepared to discuss as it seemed apparent that they had not read the material in advance; they did not seem to be prepared to discuss the questions that were available to them prior to class; while there was an expectation of classroom participation that they were graded on, there was no way to truly assess their participation which may have led to a lack of motivation to come prepared; the instructor stayed to work with the students in the front 1/3 of the room and the teaching assistant worked with one group in the last row of the room so there were a number of small groups in the middle that received no further guidance; and the room was not conducive for small group discussion due to fixed seats which do not allow anyone to turn the row behind them nor was it conducive for the instructors to move easily to assist small groups. With all of these difficulties, the instructor remained positive, encouraging, and helpful, allowing students to feel comfortable making comments. When he sensed students not being prepared, he created a more contemporary scenario and asked them to discuss how it fit the highlighted key ideas for the day's topic. This seemed to help but might also be seen as a reason some students may not come prepared. Finding the balance of engaging students with the expectation of coming to class prepared, and consistently being flexible and accommodating in class when they aren't prepared can be quite difficult for any teacher.

Overall: Dr. "Teacher" is an extremely knowledgeable professor who is providing many opportunities for student engagement. As this is the first time he has taught this course, he is applauded for trying many different activities and applying a number of strategies to motivate students to be prepared for class and to use class time for applying theories. Overall, the strategies he used were fairly effective and will become more effective as he includes and streamlines them; students were obviously starting to accept them as part of the class. At our post-observation meeting, we discussed other methods to assess student understanding, preparation, and participation during class which would help hold accountable the students for those participation grades as delineated in the syllabus. Some options to include are the One-Minute Paper, Student-Generated "Test Question" Cards, "Think-Pair-Share" for discussion partners (especially if the immovable chairs create a problem with small-group discussion), and Real-World Examples that might encourage students to enact a dramatic presentation of various scenarios in applying various theories. It may be necessary to simply talk with the students in class about the reasons for pre-class preparation, the goals for in-class work, and their suggestions for continuing with this expectation. Additionally, it may be helpful when scheduling rooms for the next semester of this class to identify a different room with more flexibility in arranging chairs that would enhance engagement activities.

Signed: Dr. An Observer

Dated: March 30, 2015