

## News for Adjuncts

April 1, 2014

## **Special Interest Notes:**

- Say it aloud
- Really evaluate comprehension
- · Give them a clue



## **Individual Highlights:**

Success is possible
Students want to learn
Test your class emphasis
Let them learn from the test
Go over tests afterward

## Test-making Tips

We all know our students may want to make a passing grade, and all too many depend on the final test to ensure they do - -despite their average in your class. To help everyone learn as much as they can, articulate the test tips that work for your style of exam.

First, the last test, or any other, may or may not be departmental. In either case, let the students know how the tests are devised so they have the greatest option of displaying their real learning. Articulate "how to study" (read, take notes, et cetera) throughout the semester. Your syllabus (departmental or not) should display a logical progression of ideas and skills.

Secondly, you may want to make a copy of the test format (if you use more than one kind of question) available on your Blackboard site. Students should not be surprised by HOW you test them (we can only hope the content is not surprising). Consider a variety of ways to ask information. Let the student show multiple skills on each test. If there is a departmental test, be sure your students have been exposed to all the necessary material.

You may also want to articulate how students can turn their notes into efficient study materials. Many students opt for "wide" mastery rather than "deep" learning. The test itself can encourage students to go for "real" learning if you emphasize analysis and application. You may articulate how exactly a student can



use what you are teaching in the next class or in the workplace. If we are truly producing life-long learners, we need to assess that kind of thinking.

Discussing tests is another opportunity to show students how real learning matters. You may want to show them how the class, at the testing moment, has led to each test question. If they expect you to test what you think they should have learned, a number will learn just that. Make your tests an integral part of the learning experience.

Please help your students value the importance of real learning - -not surface mastery (remembered only long enough to take the test). We have to spend some "thinking time" preparing tests if we expect our students to really learn the material.

Encourage your students to become a real part of the teaching-learning dynamic. Our class may be the only chance they give themselves.

Encourage students to take their own education seriously by testing authentically.

