

How do I promote active learning?

Module focus

- active learning

Module outcomes

- you will review the principles of active learning theory
- you will be able to reflect on suitable active learning scenarios for your discipline.

'Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.'

(Source: Chickering, A. & Gamson, Z, 1987 'Seven principles for good practice' AAHE Bulletin, 39, 3-7).

Take a moment to reflect on this comment.

What challenges does this pose for *your* teaching?

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Possible solutions

In your particular discipline, focus on one particular topic/concept of a unit you teach. Using the material presented at <http://tip.psychology.org/sequence.html>, plan a sequence which your students would go through when studying that topic/concept.

More help

Here are some resources from which you may seek further advice. They are all annotated so as to assist you in making judgements about what might be useful advice for your particular teaching context. By exploring some or all of these resources, you may well be able to generate strategies to suit your particular circumstances.

1. <http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/teaching/toolbox/pedagogy.html#what> - a brief discussion of deep and surface learning and tips for promoting effective learning.
2. <http://tip.psychology.org/sequence.html> - provides a useful background summary of a range of learning theories and their implications for how a teacher might sequence the learning experience.
3. http://ctl.stanford.edu/Newsletter/active_learning.pdf - from Stanford University, this is a short overview article of ideas on how to encourage more active learning in the classroom.
4. <http://cfe.unc.edu/pdfs/FYC2.pdf> - some ideas for strategies which promote active learning, from the University of North Carolina.
5. http://www.yorku.ca/cst/ideas/recommended/active_collaboration_onlin.html - includes a wide range of ideas for conducting successful tutorials.