

Ensure Students Are Learning: Faculty Descriptions of Innovative Teaching Practices

Whiteboard Exercises Allow for Accountability and Prompt Feedback

Innovative Teaching Practice Description:

Prior to class, the instructor asks students to review key concepts then complete worksheets or online assessments. To determine which students completed the readings and came prepared, the instructor has students independently use whiteboards stationed around the classroom to fill in musical staves, such as constructing major or minor scales. Using the whiteboards allows the instructor and peers to see the work as it is developing and to provide prompt feedback. Students mostly work independently, but collaboration happens organically as students provide feedback and spontaneously help each other through the board exercises. The instructor also asks students to compare their work with peers to discuss any differences. Because class sections are small and thus there is ample whiteboard space for each student, the instructor can easily identify those who are struggling or not engaging in the exercise. At that point, the instructor connects directly with each student to address any questions and provide guidance.

In more advanced classes, the instructor walks students through a group analysis of printed work. In doing so, the instructor will call upon each student to answer a question related to the work. However, the general format is the same—the instructor will ask students to read and complete an assignment prior to class then engage students in an exercise during class.