Building on Columbus

The TLCP sessions at Columbus in April included the symposium, "Planning for Effective Teaching and Learning," and the elective, "Using Cases to Enhance Learning." To further develop themes within those two programs, TLCP faculty have written short articles for the *Newsletter.* Julie Murphy and Jack Burke have prepared "Developing Well-Constructed Cases," and Brenda Gleason and Zack Stacy serve up an essay on "The Feedback Sandwich."

Developing Well-Constructed Cases

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The key to educating pharmacists is to develop practice opportunities and assessments of the knowledge, skills, and habits or attitudes necessary for the practice of pharmacy. Cases can be a useful tool throughout the learning process. In the classroom, cases can reinforce material or allow students an opportunity to apply what they learn. Assessment of higher cognitive levels may be achieved through cases requiring application or analysis of information. Proper construction of cases is crucial to their effective use in enhancing student learning.

First, the case should be optimally constructed to achieve a clear, specific learning outcome for a given learning situation. Prospectively defining specific performance criteria for an ability outcome can provide the basis for developing the case. A skill, such as performing a calculation to interpret data, may need to be learned, so a sample case could require a student to demonstrate that skill. In contrast, if a professional value, such as empathy, is to be assessed, the construction of the case may be quite different. Different case formats will work in different learning situations. In class, time constraints necessitate having a well-defined goal for the case. Closed cases with a specific answer are useful in this setting. For homework cases, however, an open case with more than one possible solution could be constructed to practice multiple abilities. Beginning with the learning outcome and setting in mind will help direct the construction of the case.

Second, a case should contain the information needed to achieve the learning outcome. For example, if the student is to determine which additional laboratory data are needed to monitor a patient's therapy, that information should be withheld when constructing the case. Similarly,

> *I am learning all the time. The tombstone will be my diploma.*
>
> *–Eartha Kitt*

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if the case is to be used in class, limiting the information to only what is necessary will make it easier to complete the case in a timely manner. In contrast, a case designed to practice multiple abilities will require a comprehensive data set. The decision to include or exclude data should be based on the desired goal.

Third, the complexity of the case should be appropriate for the level of the student and the learning outcome. Students at earlier stages of a program may require more directed cases with a focused learning outcome. As students gain more experience in solving cases and progress through a program, the complexity of the cases can increase. Complex, real-life patient cases will be a natural part of advanced pharmacy practice experiences. Consideration of the student's experience using cases and the outcome desired will provide direction in constructing a case as an effective learning tool.

Finally, the case writer needs to ensure the case is clearly formatted and can be completed within the specified period provided to the students. The format of the case is often influenced by the learning outcome. The S.O.A.P. (Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan) format is commonly used for patient-oriented cases, but an alternative framework could be appropriate for teaching or assessing other abilities. This use of a consistent framework for a case facilitates the reinforcement of criteria necessary for the student to successfully perform an ability. Modifying the format is appropriate in certain circumstances. Constructing the case so that it is concise will facilitate its completion during a class period when time is limited. The format of the case may influence its effectiveness in achieving the learning outcome.

Cases can be an effective tool in developing and assessing student abilities. Beginning with a clear goal for the case, with appropriate formatting and construction based on the learning situation, will determine its usefulness. As students learn to care for patients, case scenarios can simulate the practice situations in which they will need to apply their knowledge and demonstrate their skills, habits, and values.

Resources
- Alverno College. Student Assessment-as-Learning at Alverno College. Milwaukee, WI: Alverno College Institute, 1994.
- Hobson EL, Van Amburgh JA. Active learning. In: Zlatic TD, ed. Clinical Faculty Survival Guide. Lenexa, KS: American College of Clinical Pharmacy, 2010.
- Lane JL. Case Writing Guide. Available at *www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/pdf/ CaseWritingGuide.pdf*. Accessed May 25, 2011.
- Lane JL. Quick Tips for Case Writing. Available at *www.schreyerinstitute.psu. edu/pdf/CaseWritingTips.pdf*. Accessed May 25, 2011.

The Feedback Sandwich

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We've all likely experienced that feeling of complete dismay after working for hours to write an essay or complete an assignment only to have the instructor return it entirely marred in red ink with harsh comments followed by exclamation points. Did the instructor inspire you to do better? Did the instructor provide useful feedback to help you improve performance? Or, did the instructor merely deflate your efforts? As part of the 4-step Ability-Based Education (ABE) framework, the provision of feedback, or specific recommendations on how to improve performance, is essential to helping students achieve the desired outcomes. Providing feedback to students is often difficult and time-consuming. Here are a few tips to help you provide better feedback to your students.

Tip 1. Feedback should be criteria-referenced, evidence-based, and student-oriented.

When providing formative feedback on a student assignment, try to relate the feedback directly to the performance criteria associated with the assignment. For example, if using primary literature to justify therapeutic recommendations is a performance criterion for the assignment, provide feedback that relates to this criterion. In addition, provide specific examples or evidence from the student's performance to acknowledge strengths, but also to suggest ways to improve. For example, point out where in the assignment the student properly uses primary literature to justify therapeutic recommendations, and highlight specifically where in the assignment the student's justification can be improved. But don't simply correct mistakes for the student. Instead, provide feedback that guides the student on how to improve his/her performance—for this

> *Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know.*
>
> *–Daniel J. Boorstin*

example, provide feedback that prompts the student to use primary literature to support his/her therapeutic recommendations. Finally, make sure the feedback is student-centered—meaning that you take into consideration the personality and educational level of the individual student. Address the student as a unique individual. However, tell the student how well he/she is doing from a perspective outside of him/herself. Provide feedback on the performance itself rather than the student as a person. Provide feedback on the performance itself rather than the student as a person.

Tip 2. Provide useful feedback that will have a high likelihood of modifying the student's behavior.

Be sure to provide constructive feedback that leads to student performance improvement and that focuses on future behaviors and performances. Give specifics. For example, on an assignment in which use of proper grammar is a performance criterion and the assignment is fraught with grammatical errors, provide feedback that helps the student improve his/her current writing but also instills in him/her a desire to improve his/her future writing. Perhaps a comment such as "Your message here is insightful, but it is difficult for your reader to fully grasp because of the grammatical errors in this sentence. Using proper grammar in your writing will be of paramount importance as you continue in your career. As a pharmacist, you will want to ensure that patients and other health care providers can clearly understand your message."

Tip 3. Be mindful of the tone of your feedback.

The tone of feedback can communicate a sense of sincerity to the receiver. A sarcastic or angry tone may result in the feedback being misconstrued or ignored. The tone of verbal feedback may be easier for the instructor or preceptor to regulate because the nonverbal communication can significantly influence the message. The absence of nonverbal cues in written feedback forces the reader to interpret the message using his/

> *The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.*
>
> *–Alvin Toffler*

her own emotions and perceptions. Consider the various ways the following sentence could be interpreted if included in a written evaluation—"Your use of figures in the presentation was interesting."

Tip 4. Remember the feedback sandwich.

Giving and receiving negative feedback can be difficult and uncomfortable. One technique that makes negative feedback easier to process is the "feedback sandwich." This method sandwiches one specific criticism between two specific praises. The positive feedback must be genuine and highlight the desired behavior, whereas the constructive criticism should include corrective feedback focused on the performance or behavior. The goal is to provide feedback in a constructive manner that builds on student strengths while continuing to improve skills and overall performance. On the one hand, a preceptor might wish to provide feedback to a student immediately after a patient counseling session. The preceptor could quickly list all the mistakes, but this laundry list might be perceived discouragingly. On the other hand, the preceptor could provide a combination of positive and negative feedback using the sandwich method (see example below).

- **Positive (Bread):** Providing an introduction and sitting next to the patient helped to quickly establish good rapport.
- **Negative (Meat):** Substituting medical terminology like hypertension for a patient-friendly term like high blood pressure will reduce the patient's confusion.
- **Positive (Bread):** It was good to have the patient repeat the medication instructions; doing so exposed his/her misunderstanding of how often to take the drug.

Tip 5. Invite the student to seek clarification on your feedback.

Feedback will be ineffective if the student does not understand the message. Students should be invited to seek clarification on points that are not clear. Instructors and preceptors should find ways to actively gauge student understanding. For example, the preceptor can

ask the student to summarize a verbal assessment received or add his/her own specific examples to a written evaluation. Clarifying feedback provides the student and preceptor the confidence that performance and expectations are well understood.

Feedback is an essential component of ABE. Teachers must provide their students with criteria-referenced, evidence-based, and student-oriented feedback. The instructor or preceptor must package the feedback in an acceptable format with attention placed on the tone of the message. Applying these tips will result in constructive and effective feedback.

Fall Meeting in Pittsburgh

The 2011 ACCP Annual Meeting will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on Sunday, October 16, to Wednesday, October 19, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.
The two TLCP required courses that are offered in the fall are the 8-hour introductory program, "Basic Training for New Clinical Faculty and Preceptors," and the 4-hour symposium, "Implementing Teaching and Learning Strategies."

Basic Training for New Clinical Faculty and Preceptors	Saturday, October 15 *8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.*
Implementing Teaching and Learning Strategies	Monday, October 17 *1:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.*
Prerequisites for "Implementing" are "Basic Training" and "Planning for Effective Teaching and Learning."	

Each TLCP certificate recipient must also complete five 2-hour electives. In Pittsburgh, two electives will be offered.

| Education and Training PRN Focus Sessions—Pharmacy Teaching in Experiential Settings: Considerations for Introductory Practice Experiences | Tuesday, October 18 *3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.* |
| Inter-rater Reliability | Monday, October 17 *9:15 a.m.–11:15 a.m.* |

The Academy curricular schedule through 2013 is available at www.accp.com/academy.

What Are You Up To?

We invite TLCP participants to contribute short articles regarding teaching and learning. This can include descriptions of teaching strategies you have planned and implemented for the TLCP. If you want to share what you are doing, send your article to accp@accp.com.

Tips on Using Audience Response Systems

Electronic technology has great potential for more effective teaching. However, the technology must be used wisely. For suggestions on more effective use of audience response systems, see "Multiple-choice Questions You Wouldn't Put on a Test: Promoting Deep Learning Using Clickers" at the *Tomorrow's Professor* Web site, http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?ID=1083.
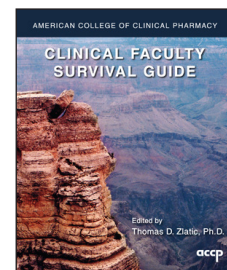
Passing It On

If you have earned the TLCP certificate, consider becoming a mentor for faculty who are just beginning the program. Your firsthand knowledge of the program gives you unique credentials for providing meaningful feedback. Not only will you be helping others, but you will also benefit personally, for as we all have experienced, the best way to learn anything is to teach it. For more information, contact Zangi Miti, Project Manager of Education, at zmiti@accp.com

Teaching and Learning at the ACCP Bookstore

ACCP's Bookstore devotes a section to educational materials chosen to provide clinical pharmacists involved in the teaching profession resources for enhancing their skill in the classroom. Here are some of the most requested books available in the Bookstore.

ACCP's *Clinical Faculty Survival Guide* offers new clinical faculty practical information, advice, and encouragement for succeeding in the roles of practitioner, teacher, researcher, and scholar. A team of seasoned authors and reviewers provides insights to guide you in a successful career as a clinical faculty member.
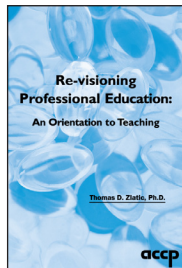
Faculty members will find this book helpful and easy to read. Residents, fellows, and graduate students preparing to pursue an academic position will find that this text offers a head start on a long and successful career. And more seasoned faculty members serving as mentors to younger colleagues will find the book's content useful and advantageous for imparting career advice.

Re-visioning Professional Education: An Orientation to Teaching presents educational principles that describe how learning takes place and offers a vision for the type of education required to prepare practitioners for providing pharmaceutical care.

Readers are invited to take instructional approaches beyond the mere conveyance of information and to embrace a philosophy, style, and manner of teaching that leads students to master the general and professional abilities necessary for competent pharmacy practice.

A case is made for promoting an active-learning experience that prepares practitioners to provide pharmaceutical care in all of its dimensions—knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values.

Topics covered include defining and teaching critical thinking, devising active-learning strategies, using assessment to structure learning, and employing writing to learn methodologies within professional courses and practice experiences.
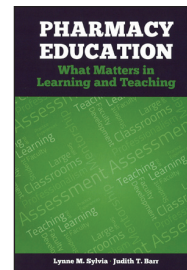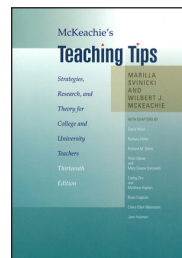
Pharmacy Education: What Matters in Learning and Teaching is an essential resource for any pharmacy faculty member. More than a narration of the philosophical aspects of teaching and personal perspectives on life as a faculty member, it explores what matters, why it matters, and how to apply the matter to teaching, learning, and assessment in pharmacy education. It covers a variety of teaching settings (e.g., large classroom, small group teaching, clinical site) and guides the reader in developing a deeper understanding of what it means to be a teacher.

McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers, 13th Edition provides helpful strategies for dealing with both the everyday challenges of university teaching and those that arise in efforts to maximize learning for every student. The suggested strategies are supported by research, and they are adaptable to specific classroom situations. Rather than suggest a "set of recipes" to be followed mechanically, McKeachie's Teaching Tips gives you the tools needed to deal with the ever-changing dynamics of teaching and learning at the university level.

Visit the ACCP Bookstore Teaching and Learning section to learn more about these and other valuable faculty resources.

Teaching is more than imparting knowledge, it is inspiring change.
Learning is more than absorbing facts, it is acquiring understanding.

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