TECHE: Teaching Essentials for Careers in Higher Education

This set of eight online courses is focused on research and practice in effective college teaching. Featuring international experts on education in a range of disciplines, they offer theory, practical exercises, reflection, and resources for everyone from new instructors to practiced professors. They include video instruction and an extensive list of additional reading. These courses can be taken at any time and in any setting. You can follow a course straight through, or select the course modules most useful to you.

These modules were developed by experts in teaching in higher education. They were produced by Epigeum, one of the leading publishers of online courses for higher education professionals (http://www.epigeum.com). The copyrighted material is licensed for use by those who are affiliated with Michigan State University.

The TECHE courses are available on Desire2Learn (d2l.msu.edu).

- Log in on d2l.msu.edu
- Click on “Self Registration” in the upper right of your home page
- Select “Teaching Essentials for Careers in Higher Education (Epigeum)”
- Submit the registration information
- The course should now appear on home page under “TeachingLearning”
- Once you click on the course, the separate courses should appear under your content browser
- While you are in any of the courses, the modules for all of the courses appear in the “Content Map” on the left of the page
- You can also return to full list of course titles on the “course home” page; hit the “home” icon under the Content Browser bar.

TECHE COURSES

Lecturing 1
Teaching your first course can produce anxiety. Instructors cope with this anxiety in a number of ways. They might over prepare so they do not run out of material; they might fill the entire hour talking as fast as possible, hardly daring to pause for breath for fear of a student using the gap as an opportunity to ask a question. Some new lecturers focus largely on the content – making sure they appear to know everything – rather than concentrating on what students need to know. Some concentrate on their own performance – rather than on what students should be doing during the lecture.

This course will address issues such as anxiety – but its main focus reaches beyond pure survival and into the crucial question of how to ensure that students to actually learn something from lectures – and the answer does not involve talking all the time! The aim is to provide useful guidance for the ‘new lecturer’ and a refresher for more experienced lecturers who would like to build their confidence, solve problems and improve their students’ learning and satisfaction.
Lecturing 2
This course looks at a range of ways to deliver your lectures effectively, to ensure that students are engaged and supported, and to handle problems and incidents. It includes such topics as incorporating technology, supporting active learning during lectures, supporting effective student note taking, supporting students with special needs, handling incidents and problems during lecture (including in large classes), and improving lecturing through reflection and collection of evidence.

Resources to Enhance Student Learning
This course aims to answer your questions about how to find, select, and successfully make use of learning resources. In your own work you will have been exposed to a range of resources and instructional styles – but being in a position where you have to make selections and build materials for your students may feel quite different; the amount of choice can sometimes be overwhelming.

This course will take you step by step through the process of identifying, wisely selecting or creating, and using resources with your students – and then evaluating their effectiveness. At the end, you will be better equipped to enable your students to learn efficiently and effectively.

Making the Most of Discussion
Discussions can be conducted in classes of any size: large-enrollment courses with over 100 students, midsize courses and seminars, and tutorials of less than 10. Discussions can contribute to learning in courses of any format: face-to-face, online, and hybrids that combine both. Most strategies covered in this course can be applied to any of these settings. When an approach requires a particular setting, this factor will be noted. In addition, a separate chapter is devoted specifically to online discussions and their unique considerations.

Good discussions can help make your courses highly effective. However, discussions are also among the most unpredictable and challenging of teaching strategies. All teachers know what it is like to try to create vibrant, lively, engaged interaction among everyone in the class and, instead, watch the discussion fall flat. Each chapter of this course looks at a different stage in the process of encouraging a successful discussion.

Supervising Projects and Dissertations
The focus of this course is on the supervision process and how you, as a supervisor, can structure and organize the period of time available to maximize the likelihood that your students will produce a project report, dissertation or research thesis of excellent quality that meets the standards required. A successful supervisor–student relationship is both fulfilling for the supervisor and motivating for the student, and will result in the best possible circumstances for a successful outcome.

The course deals with projects or dissertations which are completed over a period of four months or more and involve the creation of a final product, such as a project write-up, dissertation or research thesis of a specified length. As well as some form of written account, there may be additional 'products' such as video, creative writing, art, music and so on. In this course, 'research project' or 'research thesis' will be taken to include the written account as well as any other relevant products.

This course is intended for faculty who are either new or relatively new to supervising substantial student projects or dissertations at either undergraduate or graduate level. It may also be of interest as a refresher for those who have been supervising for a number of years.
Marking and Giving Feedback
How do teachers manage to meet these three sometimes conflicting goals – helpfulness, accuracy and efficiency? That's what this course is about. You are going to learn about assessing student work in a way that fits the requirements of the course and the institution, but also sets the stage for giving really helpful feedback to each student. We will look at general principles as well as at concrete examples.

This course is designed to help you mark your students' work and give them feedback, whether you are working with someone else's assignment or you created the assignment yourself. It will consider both the assessment and the learning aspects of marking and feedback at every stage, reflecting the fact that these processes must be kept in mind all the time.

Understanding the Principles of Course Design
This course starts by considering the issue of context, and identifies the wide range of things you initially need to find out: what institutional regulations and policies you need to comply with; how your course fits with others; what the students are like; and what is expected of you. It moves on to discuss three bodies of work from the research literature that each identify clear links between certain aspects of course design and the potential learning of the students.

Having investigated these links, the course then explains the importance of establishing clearly what you intend the students to learn and then designing a course where the teaching, learning activities and assessment align with those intended outcomes.

The key aspects of building your course are explored: designing appropriate activities; balancing in-class and out-of-class activity; the use of learning technologies; and how to provide students with feedback on their progress.

The course closes with a brief look at how you can evaluate your course.

Developing Your Teaching
This course focuses on your professional growth in teaching. It is based on the premise that you can stay vital in teaching by continuously reflecting on your teaching practice and, through this process, developing new teaching skills and approaches. This course will help you develop as a teacher by following four key questions: 1) Who am I as a teacher; 2) How can I assess (get feedback on) my teaching; 3) What can I do to improve my teaching; 4) How can I continue to improve as a teacher.

Clinical Teaching
All clinicians are clinical teachers at some point, and most take their responsibility to teach very seriously – but there are so many different ways of teaching. There are still some clinicians whose expectation is that students will learn most or all the significant facts in their subject area during a few short years of study. The implication is that it is the (impossible) job of the educators to teach the whole of medicine in a very short time. Fortunately, the ‘fact-pushers’ have lost the battle with the ‘concept-developers’ and curricula with significant amounts of student-selected components reflect the drive to equip students with the processes for life-long learning, rather than an endless list of memorized information.

This course will take a chronological approach to investigating how to teach with patients to best effect in order to develop students' skills rather than just their knowledge base.