5E: Observe & Analyze

Greg McVerry, PhD, Assistant Professor, Education [00:00:00] All right, looks like everybody has just finished their midterms and we have a few minutes left, so what I'd like to do is get some feedback from you. I've made this document to mark what's been going well in class. So just tell me about the first half of the semester. What's been going well, what isn't.

Student [00:00:17] Do you mean in terms of assignments that we liked, or are you talking about things that we did in class?

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:00:22] Sure, let's start with assignments. What were some of the assignments that everybody liked?

Student [00:00:26] I like the group project we did on collaborative, argumentative essays. We did ours on vaccines.

Student [00:00:32] Yeah, that was interesting. I like that each of us had a specific task. I also feel like I really learned a lot about looking for claims and evidence while working on that assignment.

Student [00:00:43] I actually thought that assignment was really difficult. There are a few members in my group that were busy, so it was really hard to find time outside of class to meet.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:00:52] So I'm hearing some good things, some bad things about the collaborative essay. Is there any, any other information or feedback about the collaborative essay that we did?

Student [00:01:02] I think it was fine.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:01:03] All right, so you know what I'm gonna do, I'm going to add that to the column of things that are working. All right, other things about class, what else, what else? Any other feedback for me?

Student [00:01:16] Well, I have a hard time keeping up with taking notes at times. You talk a little fast sometimes.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:01:23] You know what, I've heard that before, actually a couple of times a day. So why don't I go ahead and add that, things to, you know, that aren't working, things to change. All right, slow down when going over notes. All right. Got that. What, any other feedback?

Student [00:01:38] I really like the videos that you show in class. I think they're really helpful.

Student [00:01:42] Actually, I think they can be confusing sometimes.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:01:45] Oh, interesting. So I'm hearing some good things, some not so good things about the videos. Is there any other feedback about the videos?

Student [00:01:55] I think they're pretty good.

Student [00:01:56] They're okay, but maybe there's too many of them. Maybe you could just give them as options to watch outside of class.

Student [00:02:06] I don't find them helpful. And truthfully, I zone out a bit in class when you show them.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:02:12] You know what, since I'm getting mixed reviews about the video, why don't I add a third column, Mixed Reviews, and I'll put the videos there. Because of the midterm we're really running out of time to give feedback, so if you want to give me anything else, just zap me an email and we can go over it next time we meet, okay, everybody? Congrats on finishing the midterm and I will see everybody on Wednesday.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:02:42] Hi, thanks so much for meeting with me. I'd really love your advice on that mid-semester feedback I got from my students.

Peer [00:02:47] Of course, I'm happy to go over your feedback. I actually just got mine back as well so we can go through yours and we can discuss mine. Tell me what kind of stuff they were saying.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:02:54] Well, I decided to ask my elementary literacy class what was working in class and what wasn't working in class. And when I read my notes, I just don't really find it that helpful.

Peer [00:03:03] What sort of things were they saying?

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:03:04] One student started by saying he liked the group assignment about argumentative writing and another student added that she learned a lot, and so I thought that was great. But then another student said she didn't like the assignment, and that's kind of how the whole feedback session went. Someone liked something, someone else didn't like the other thing. About the only thing they agreed on was that I talk too fast, and that's pretty much how the entire feedback session went.

Peer [00:03:26] Well, you can't please everyone.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:03:28] That's true.

Peer [00:03:30] Were there maybe some common themes in the feedback or possible things that you can, I don't know, try differently.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:03:35] Well, I can definitely slow down when giving notes, I mean, that's a given. I already told them that I would do that, and I try, and that, that should be a good reminder to help me to slow down. One area that was, I got a lot of conflicting information was my use of videos. Some, like, if you noticed, some thought they were helpful and other people thought they were confusing. Other people thought they were shown too often. It was just, it was a lot of conflicting ideas.

Peer [00:03:58] Okay, well, do you think that there's a way you could adjust how you use the videos in class?

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:04:02] Well, there are two to three that are, like, really important and they go over the concepts, they're very concrete. So maybe I could just focus in on those and maybe I don't show them in class.

Peer [00:04:13] Yeah, I, I always like to think of it as balance, right? I try to make sure that when I'm planning out my classes that, over a couple of class periods, everybody gets what they need, right. Does that make sense?

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:04:24] It does, but I just feel frustrated because I waste class time to get feedback that I can't really use.

Peer [00:04:32] I understand. I have been there myself. I have a suggestion for you. I use a method called the Stop-Start-Continue method.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:04:38] Oh, tell me more about that.

Peer [00:04:40] So the Stop-Start-Continue method is when I give the students a handout with three columns.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:04:45] I'm gonna write this down.

Peer [00:04:45] Yeah. There's the Stop column, the Start column, and the Continue column. In the Stop column, I ask them to list things they want me to stop doing, in the Start column, I ask them to list things they want me to start doing, and then the Continue column, I ask them to write things they want me to continue doing. Then as a class, we brainstorm. For instance, they might want me to continue offering extra office hours before an exam, things like that.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:05:08] You know what, that works because I could actually tally that up and really get feedback that I could use.

Peer [00:05:13] Exactly. And on the handout itself, you can actually list specific assignments so you can really get specific with the feedback that you're getting.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:05:20] And that's what I'm looking for. I wanted to know what they wanted to do. So I'm going to try the Start-Stop-Continue, and I think that's going to give me what I need.

Peer [00:05:28] I think it really works.

Greg McVerry, PhD [00:05:29] Thank you so much for meeting with me. I'm going to try it next class and I'll let you know how it goes.

Peer [00:05:33] Great.