

Reciprocal Interview

Overview

The point of the reciprocal interview is to give the instructor and students a chance to ask questions aimed at better understanding each other's expectations while creating a positive classroom environment.

Activity

1. Create a handout of questions you will ask students.
2. Put students into small groups. Give them time to review the questions and determine their answers (see sample questions below).
3. Interview the class by asking the questions and clarifying answers.
4. With students in the same groups, ask them to prepare questions to interview you. They should choose one member of the team to be the interviewer. You can also provide students with some possible questions (see sample questions below).
5. Let the students interview you about your expectations for them and the course.

Instructor-to-Student Sample Questions

1. What are your goals for this course? To learn new skills? To become better educated? To learn the subject matter? To fulfill a requirement? To get a good grade? To apply your learning to other aspects of your life? Something else?
2. How can I best help you achieve your goals? Lectures, exams, discussions, practice work, group activities, office hours? (Think back to excellent professors/courses you have experienced.)
3. What reservations, if any, do you have about this course?
4. What is the best thing that could happen in this course? The worst thing?
5. What norms of behavior, or ground rules, should we set up to ensure that the course is successful (mutual respect, question asking, punctuality, etc.)?

Student-to-Instructor Sample Questions

1. What is your main objective for this course? What are your goals?
2. What is your theory of learning? How will you help students learn?
3. What is your approach to evaluating student learning?
4. What are your expectations of students?
5. How would you define your role in the course?
6. What is important to you in teaching this course?