How to Train Your Professor: Tips for Flight According to Students

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Before we Begin

- We are very excited to share this PowerPoint presentation with you online! In the notes section of the slides we have provided some additional context to help you navigate the presentation.

- This presentation was delivered on July 4th, 2013 at the International Study Association on Teachers and Teaching (ISATT) in Ghent, Belgium.


- If you have any questions about this presentation please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Tricia Seifert at triciaseifert@utoronto.ca.
Our Plan

1. Overview of the Research Study
2. Popcorn Activity
3. Living a Dual Life & Tips for Flight: Voices from Students
4. ‘Double-Loop Learning’ in Higher Education
5. Reflection
6. Q & A
Overview
The Problem

- The knowledge-based economy is driving a greater-than-ever demand for skills and higher education levels; the benefits include higher earnings and lower unemployment risks (HRSDC, 2008)

- With the enormous public cost of education, student success is critical and as educators we cannot afford to have students not meet their goals

- Both students and taxpayers experience opportunity costs when students do not reach their potential
Purpose

- While we cannot force students to succeed, we can organize ourselves to support them. We can assist by making important services more accessible to students and modelling valuable learning strategies which increase the likelihood of success.
History of the Research Project

- Phase 0 - Content review of SSASO titles, portfolios and reporting lines
- Phase I - Interviews with SSASO, focus groups with SAS staff (managers, directors & front-line)
- Context: 5 colleges and 9 universities across Ontario, Canada
- 292 Participants
Sample & Data – Phase II

- Interviews & focus groups with senior administrators, faculty, student affairs & services (SAS) staff and students
- 4 colleges and 9 universities across Ontario
- 354 total participants, 46 senior administrators, 109 SAS staff, 127 students and 72 faculty participants
- Participants were asked for 2 types of data
  1. Depictions/drawings of how their institution supports student success
  2. Descriptions/examples of their efforts in supporting student success
Data Analysis

1. Data were transcribed

2. Overarching domains developed

3. Explicated codes were developed to describe each domain

4. Reviewed & coded visual data from faculty and students

5. Categorized based on interview and visual data
Literature on the Learning Paradigm

- The mission, vision, culture, and structure of postsecondary institutions must undergo a paradigm shift from the Instruction Paradigm to the Learning Paradigm -- from providing instruction to students to producing learning in students (Barr & Tagg, 1995)

- According to O’Banion (1997), postsecondary institutions face limitations in that they are:
  1. bureaucracy-bound
  2. time-bound
  3. place-bound
  4. faculty are role-bound

- Single-Loop versus Double-Loop learning in higher education. People hold maps in their heads about how to plan, implement and review their actions. Few people are aware that the maps they use to take action are not the theories they explicitly espouse and even fewer people are aware of the maps or theories they do use (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Brockbank and McGill 2007; Tagg, 2007)
Ordinary Class Session

How do you prepare for inclusive learning and engage students in an everyday class session?
Dream Class Session

How have you envisioned teaching this same class session if there was no limit to your imagination?
Popcorn!

- Crumple your ordinary and dream class session sticky notes.
- Throw your sticky notes a few rows behind or in front of you to another participant.
Depictions and Drawings: 

Living A Dual Life
We heard a little of this…

The Sims

The Textbook
Descriptions and Examples:

Tips for Flight
Tip#1: Intimacy

Learning among 800 undergraduate students is challenging

“Even though it's a lecture, she encourages us to ask her questions.” --University Student

“For instance, I just came from a lecture. This professor talked for two hours. ... There is no engagement.” --University Student
Learning among 800 undergraduate students is challenging

“So instead of just standing up there and lecturing, it's more like group discussions and contributions and you just kind of lead the discussions. I feel like that's the best way to learn and to really include everyone and get everyone participating. … Often people tend to zone out when someone's talking for a really long time without any involving of anyone else.”--University Student

“When you're able to apply the theories in class and look at it critically in a 16-14 student format and be able to feed off each other. Whereas in the lecture of 1 of 90 … once you put your hand up, the prof's like, ‘Ok, you can email me that question, right?’ It's no longer a discussion.”--University Student
Tip#2: Efficiency

Technology is not a panacea

“We've got the online program, which I love- we can get all our marks, our grades and everything. Our teachers post assignments... like, our teachers really use it.” -- College Student

“[Faculty and staff] will be like, ‘Oh, it's on the student website,’ ... There's like 5 different websites with 5 different log-ins. there's so many websites, it's like... which one are you referring to?” -- College Student
Technology is not a panacea

“Now that some classes have no seminars, some professors are trying to do online seminars as a class, and I don't find that as effective. I mean, once you have a hundred responses, ... by the time you get to the 80th person, you're like, ‘I didn't even get to that point!’ And it may be a great point, but you couldn't really contribute; if it was in a seminar style, you would've.”
--University Student

“So we crowd source and fact check all the way through. We end up using Facebook as the place to do all this crazy amazing stuff while I am lecturing because I know they are on there anyway. I will play a video, play a commercial from like the Super Bowl ... and then I'll say 'just for purposes of sharing, can somebody put this on the Facebook wall?' ... So the whole lecture is basically captured really in a way, but in this grassroots way, that I don't know ... It just blows me away.”
--University Professor
Tip#3: Engagement

* Sitting and listening are basic skills

“We have to work with clients to organize a campaign. The client they had this year was a bigger client and we got to actually sit in and watch how they [second year students worked]...We didn't play a big role, but we sat in on focus groups for them. We kind of watched how to do the procedure and how to make a campaign.”

-- College Student

“One of my profs- she is a defense attorney. She sets up opportunities for us to go to court so we can watch how that all plays out. Things above and beyond the classroom. She has volunteers come with her to a wrongful convictions proceeding.”

-- University Student
“I thought that with the Smartphone, it’d be good to have flashcards; so you can just see the card and flap it or just swipe and go. Flashcards to remember vocabulary like if you were in Medicine or something. And I went online to put them up, I had 200 that I made, and there were 700 cards from my class already made. My students are ahead; they are already there creating these things for themselves. So I got in touch with that person, [and asked] can I use some of these?”

-- University Professor
**Tip#4: Compassion**

*Remember our names and our aims*

“I just got talking to her [faculty member], and she asked me what I wanted to do, I want to go to grad school for Occupational Therapy, and when an opportunity came around, she actually offered me a position to go to study in New York for two weeks for a program that would just be good to put on my grad school application. So she said, ‘Oh, I remember you said this, do you want to do this?’”  
--University Student

“In our program we do internships, so I’d say the big one for me would be when my teacher sat me down and went through all my strengths, and asked me what I was most vulnerable about myself, my weaknesses. Sat down and worked through them all so that went to my internship in Toronto, I wouldn’t feel uncomfortable talking about those things.”  
--College Student
“Faculty member doing community service learning work with students in their Statistics class. They work with community organizations to help them analyze piles of data. Students get real world experience in data analysis, working with partners and the whole class makes the final presentations so everyone can learn about analysis and these community groups. Leads them to moving out of student culture and to real work. To manage this takes a lot of personal time investment.”
-- University Professor
Tip#5: Intentionality
Make it Engaging and Challenging

“My [course name] professor, he was really, really passionate and everyone loved the way he taught… He was just so passionate about what he was teaching, and he often gave examples from his own life. Like he showed us his transcript and how he flunked out first year and then he became a professor after that. He was using that to illustrate how teenagers are exploring and their brains aren't fully developed, which often leads to more risk taking. And he'd also show pictures of his youth and how he was involved in teenage rebellion activities. And so, I think it really makes it more real when he brings in more stories from his own life.”
--University Student
“It helps me stay current in the field. It keeps my list of employers up-to-date, because companies are always getting bought out, or going under bankruptcy, or changing their name. It also allows me to keep in touch with past graduates… so it's nice to see the grads come back and that they went through the program, they had success, and now they're giving back to the community a little.”—College Professor

“I follow the students. They taught me how they want to be taught.”—University Professor
Meaning Making
Single-Loop Learning
most common learning style, problem solving

Governing Variables
Goals, values, beliefs, conceptual frameworks

Why we do what we do

Action Strategies and Techniques

What we do

Results and Consequences

What we obtain

Double-Loop Learning
more than problem solving, this learning style reevaluates and reframes goals, values, etc.
Making the Double-Loop:

What We Think vs. The Way We Think about Things

Kolb's learning cycle depicting "instrumental" learning

"Double-loop" learning can bring fundamental shifts in understanding and involve emotions

reflection

test hypothesis

experience

generalization

new understanding

paradigm shift

emergent knowing
Governing Value: Different students learn material at different rates
Action Strategy: Self-paced courses, modular courses, variable scheduling
Consequences: Improved retention, increased success

Governing Value: All students should learn all subjects in 16 weeks
Action Strategy: 16-week syllabus, paced assignments, paced assessments
Consequences: Low retention, high failure rate

Governing Value: All students should learn all subjects in 16 weeks
Action Strategy: 16-week syllabus, change assignments, change assessments
Consequences: Low retention, high failure rate
Exemplars in Action: Partnerships for the Whole Child
Exemplars in Action: Faculty in Residence

Weekends with Faculty In Residence...

Events
Friday: Meet & Greet and Arts Festival
Saturday: Brunch, Career Discussion, Art Gallery of Ontario, Dinner
Sunday: Breakfast/brunch Recap

Featuring Professors Alison & Holger Syme

SPECIAL EDITION: ARTS FESTIVAL

February 10th – 12th, 2012
To be involved in this weekend event or for more information please email adam.fraser@utoronto.ca
Reflection

- How do the tips outlined relate to your dream session?
- How do you ask for feedback from students about your teaching and their learning needs?
- What tips do your students suggest for successful and engaging teaching? What other sources inform your teaching practice?
- Identify and explain one successful and unsuccessful teaching practice you currently use.
- Describe a situation where your institution was given an opportunity to question its governing values?
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We appreciate your support.
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