

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING



WHAT IS IT?



A primary purpose of effective feedback is to help students learn, so it's important that students get feedback as part of an ongoing formative process in which they have the opportunity to implement changes (Shute, 2008)¹. Forms of feedback vary, and may include a completed rubric grid or written comments on a problem set or draft paper. Effective feedback can lead to more self-directed and autonomous learners, thinkers, and engaged members of society.

RESEARCH...



Research has shown that the most effective feedback is focused, forward-looking, and timely (Ambrose, et al. 2010; Hyland, 2013). Feedback should be formative, communicating how students are doing in relation to stated learning goals, and what specific steps they should take to improve. They should then be expected to demonstrate how they incorporated the feedback into subsequent assignments. Students should receive feedback both frequently and in a timely manner (Hyland, 2013; Wiggins, 2012).

DATA ...



48% of UCD students report that faculty often (or very often) provide prompt and useful feedback

49% report that there are often (or very often) open channels of communication between faculty and students regarding needs, concerns, and suggestions (UCUES, 2018)

¹List of all references in the complete JITT Guide.

TEACHING STRATEGIES...



- **Use rubrics** which **explicitly state the criteria** against which students' work is to be evaluated. Ensure they are **linked to learning outcomes**.
- **Prioritize information** that would be **most useful to students at the time it is received** (e.g., 2-3 recommendations for improvement). **Address patterns you see, rather than line editing**.
- **Relate comments** to specific places in the assignment, such as a **certain paragraph** in a paper or **step in a math problem**. Include some examples of places the student did well, as students often can't recognize the progress they're making toward learning outcomes.
- Provide "**feed-forward**" rather than "feed-back." Make **suggestions applicable to future work** the student will undertake, then ask **students to incorporate feedback** and state how they incorporated it.

STUDENTS SAY...



"In some discussion sections, my TAs require us to bring rough drafts for peer feedback so that we can revise before the final paper is due. It is especially helpful when they also provide a checklist or rubric so we know what to look for."

"Sometimes we have homework due right before an exam, so we don't get our work back ahead of time. However, I've had an instructor who reviews general trends as feedback to the entire class. This helps provide focus for my studying."

REFLECTION...



- *How might you design an assignment structure that features frequent feedback building to the next assignment, allowing students to incorporate that feedback and practice the key skills of the course?*
- *Consider how you weight certain dimensions of a paper. How can you focus largely on aspects of the assignment that most directly relate to learning outcomes, rather than grammar and mechanics?*



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