

Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergrad Education

1. *Good practice encourages contact between students and faculty.*

Student motivation and involvement are affected by the amount of interaction they share with faculty, in and out of the classroom. In addition, when students face rough times, it is faculty concern that contributes to their perseverance. Faculty members positively impact the intellectual commitment of students with whom they form relationships. They also encourage these students to reflect on their personal values and future plans.

2. *Good practice develops reciprocity and cooperation among students.*

A cooperative environment and increased student involvement in their own learning are results of encouraging group work and team effort. Learning should be collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Additionally, sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding.

3. *Good practice uses active learning techniques.*

Although the lecture is the most common form of teaching method, students learn more by being participants in the learning process. It is critical that students talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must take what they learn and adopt as part of who they are.

4. *Good practice gives prompt feedback.*

Students need appropriate and timely feedback on their academic performance in order to benefit from their courses. Early on in the semester, students need help in assessing their existing knowledge and competence. They need frequent opportunities to perform and receive suggestions for improvement. Along the way, students also need to learn how to assess themselves using personal reflection.

5. *Good practice emphasizes time on task.*

Learning is a function of the time and energy invested into a task, both in and out of the classroom. Time management is critical for students and professional alike. Allocating realistic amounts of time means effective learning for students and effective teaching for faculty. Institutional definitions of time expectations for not only students, but also faculty, staff, and administrators can establish a basis for high performance.

6. *Good practice communicates high expectations.*

Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when instructors take extra efforts to ensure that students understand subject content and are actively learning. High expectations are important for everyone, not just the bright and well-motivated students. Poorly prepared students and those unwilling to exert themselves will also improve if goals are set at high, yet attainable levels.

7. *Good practice respects diverse talents and ways of learning.*

People bring different talents and styles of learning to college with them. Students need the opportunity to showcase their talents and learn in ways that personally work. Then they can be pushed to learning in new ways that do not come so easily and experiment with different methods.

Adapted from Chickering, A.W. & Gamson, Z.F. (March 1987). Seven principals for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin*, pp.3-7.

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