

FALL COURSE PLANNING WORKSHOPS

August 31st – September 4th, 2009
University Club

Sponsored by the
Instructional Development Program
University of Rhode Island

Understanding Today's Students

Monday, August 31st, 9:00-12:00

Good teaching begins with knowing students--who they are, what they bring to our courses, and how they view the challenges we pose. Together, we'll review what we know about students--their academic backgrounds and study habits, their goals and expectations, their learning styles and stages of intellectual development. Some of this information describes students nationwide; some is URI-specific.

Presenting and Explaining

Tuesday, September 1st, 9:00-12:00

Perhaps we lecture too much, but lecturing has a place in most courses as a method for presenting and explaining ideas. We'll briefly review research on what students must do to learn from lectures, survey several techniques for engaging them in those activities, and then turn to Tuesday's main events--sample lectures by four of URI's outstanding teachers.

Getting Students Involved

Wednesday, September 2nd, 9:00-12:00

The research is clear: learning is not a spectator sport. If students are to remember and be able to use their knowledge, they must talk about ideas, write about them, connect them to past experiences and apply them to the sorts of challenges they'll encounter now and in the future. Several faculty will discuss techniques they use to involve students, including small group, writing-to-learn, case study, problem-based learning, collaborative learning, and online activities.

Testing and Grading

Thursday, September 3rd, 9:00-12:00

How many tests should we give? Should we count attendance? How about class participation? Can multiple choice exams test anything beyond memorization? Are essays better tests of learning? What other assessment techniques are available? What are the standards for student work, who sets them, and how do I know if mine are reasonable? Should I be concerned about cheating? We'll talk about these and related issues on Thursday.

Meeting the First Class

Friday, September 4th, 9:00-12:00

First impressions matter. Students' reactions to the first class meeting largely determine whether they'll continue or drop the course, work hard or slide by, participate in class or never say a word. On Friday, we'll sample some first class activities faculty have used to arouse interest, preview course activities, and prepare students for serious study.

To register, please call or send an email message indicating which sessions you wish to attend.

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