What kind of teaching do we aspire to at DU?
• Teaching Task Force Report, 2005
• Teaching Excellence Initiative, Faculty Senate, 2010-11
• Positioning DU as a Leader in Teaching Excellence for the 21st Century, Renew DU Incubators, 2012

Most teaching excellence efforts have identified the need to articulate the kind of teaching that is valued
The Big Questions

• What kind of teaching do we aspire to at DU?

• What are the skills, knowledge, abilities, characteristics, etc. that result in teaching excellence?

• What are the qualities of teaching that make the DU learning experience unique or special?
Faculty Learning Community

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Goals for this work

- Explore your own teaching and further your understanding of the essential qualities of good teaching
- Develop community and further dialogue around teaching
- Create some language that could be shared around DU as:
  - a framework for teaching excellence
  - a guide for the OTL’s professional development efforts
  - support for individual goal-setting and personal growth
  - a basis for supporting/developing/evaluating teaching at DU
  - others?
Process

Gather evidence from:

- Our own experiences
- The Literature
- Students
- Colleagues
Our Own Experiences
The Literature

Faculty development or course design frameworks

- GTCC_Teaching Competencies.pdf
  Graduate student teaching competencies created by a consortium of 6 universities.

- Seven Principles of Good Teaching in Undergraduate Education

- Teaching Observation and Reflection Prompts.docx
  Developed by Virginia Pits with OU's OIT to guide teaching observations and support instructors in reflecting on their teaching.

- QA.pdf
  Quality Matters course design rubric

- Alan Bender.docx
  From Alan Bender, Indiana University, Bloomington on "Missing aspects of good teaching"

Attempts to evaluate teaching effectiveness

- IDEA Center SETs.pdf
  IDEA Center Student Evaluations of Teaching - relationship of teaching methods to learning objectives

- Rubric for Evaluating Engaged Teaching.docx
  Developed by Utah Valley University to help guide P&T decisions.
From Students

Anthropology Grad student 4

What kind of teaching do we aspire to at DU?

- "Participatory"
  - "Students become interested in their own learning."

- "Engaged"
  - "Students engage with class material and apply information to their interests."
  - "Small group learning formats to engage with material deeply instead of memorization."

- "Critical"
  - "Teachers present alternatives / critiques."
  - "Allow students to disagree with concepts, etc."

students learning knowledge content
Prototypes

Alejandro’s new teaching philosophy (work in progress)

Facilitating learning experiences
- Current emphasis
- Does not pay attention to different ways of learning
- Does not pay attention to relational aspects

Creating learning environments
- New emphasis
- Facilitates embracing different ways of learning as they fit
- My role is to also pay attention to relational aspects of learning

At DU, we aspire to teaching that...

1. Looks Inward (Cultivates an authentic sense of self and identity)
2. Looks Outward (Challenges, engages and energizes our students)
3. Represents Informed Practice (Integrates tools and teaching methods that are relevant, meaningful and consistent with our identity and teaching philosophy)

My teaching profile:
I strive to provide the following for my students:
- Enthusiasm and knowledge in my subjects I teach
- Committed to a variety of teaching strategies to meet student need
- Meet students where they start in the subject and bring up their knowledge base
- Set fair, achievable, yet challenging goals and assignments
- Students know how their work will be assessed because I provide clear expectations.
- Structure classes to have low point high impact feedback in the beginning to build confidence, knowledge, and understand my expectations
- Have defined objectives for the course and for each week, so students know what will be covered.
- I use teaching moments, using events of the day or week to illustrate and discuss, so the students can become consumers and evaluators of world knowledge.
- I utilize the knowledge in past, present, and future whenever possible.
- I know the students as individuals and treat them as such, I know all the names by the end of the first class (fortunately I have no more than 20 students)
- If students are stuck on a concept, I spend additional time on it before moving on.
- I care about the students, and their learning.

The Teaching We Aspire to at DU

As DU Instructors, we aspire to:

1) Cultivate a culture of trust and inclusivity, in which all voices are heard and multiple perspectives are explored and encouraged. This means we create spaces in which students are invited to speak and we listen, and that we ourselves model the same kind of trust, respect, empathy, openness, and vulnerability that we are striving to cultivate in our classrooms.

2) Foster students’ motivation and passion for learning. This means we strive to create learning experiences that students perceive to be meaningful and relevant to their lives, passions, and goals, and that we ourselves model the kind of passion and enthusiasm we hope our students will bring to their own learning.

3) Empower students to take responsibility for their own learning, and in so doing, prepare students to be lifelong learners. This means we create learning environments in which students have the support, ownership, autonomy, and voice that enable and inspire them to take such responsibility.

4) Prepare students to work collaboratively and learn in community with others. The means that not only do we create learning environments in which students are supported in working and learning in this way, but that we ourselves are always seeking to develop and refine our own understanding of what it means to work collaboratively and learn in community, through working and learning in these ways ourselves.

5) Facilitate learning experiences in which students build upon their existing knowledge and experiences through active engagement with new knowledge and experiences. This means that we create environments in which students are given simple opportunity to share and contribute to the learnings that they currently understand, and to actively build upon their existing knowledge and understandings through interactions with their peer and their environment.
Where we are now: Feedback from Colleagues

- Our own experiences
- The Literature
- Students
- Colleagues

Students

Colleagues
Creating Collective Statements

- We facilitate active, participatory learning experiences in which students "learn by doing."
- We focus on the mastery of essential understandings, abilities, and perspectives, rather than broad content coverage.
- We make the student thinking process visible so we can build upon their existing knowledge and experiences.
- We create a safe space and supportive climate for learning where all voices are heard and multiple perspectives are respected, encouraged, and valued.
- Our students value and respect feedback and feel involved in decisions that impact their learning.
We’re inviting you to ... 

- Visit each “station”, in small groups, to review/discuss the statements:
  - Significant/Impactful Learning
  - Learning-Centered/Active
  - Inclusive/Inviting/Empathetic
  - Reflective/Evidence-Based/Lifelong Learning
At each station/cluster:

- Individually review and “vote” on each statement
  - Green = Like it as worded, *and* it’s essential
  - Yellow = Confusing/unclear, and/or not sure it’s essential
  - Red = Disagree/not essential

- For yellow and red “votes”, share with your group (and record on post-it) *why* you voted that way

- Share with your group an example of something you do in *your* teaching related to one of the statements
Moving Forward

• What are *your* takeaways from this process?

• How might this be useful ...
  – To you individually?
  – To your department?
  – To DU?

• What’s next?