

TEACHER CLARITY: STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Significant correlations between teacher clarity and student achievement (Rosenshine & Furst, 1971)

Teacher clarity related to student satisfaction and achievement (Hines, Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1985)

Clarity may be positively related to retention (Land & Lenham, 1979)

Teacher clarity can be enhanced through training (Cruickshank, 1985)



PURPOSE

Assess teacher clarity as perceived by students

Provide guidance in preparing teacher development programs and activities to improve clarity and therefore increase student learning



METHODS

**160 undergraduate course sections taught in CALS in
Spring 2012**

Instructors in 55 course sections agreed to participate

**Instrument administered in person in late February/early
March 2012**

- 2,074 participants
- 32% juniors, 44% seniors

Study approved by UF IRB



INSTRUMENT

Based on work of Kennedy, Cruickshank, Bush, & Myers
(2001)

Behaviors that are most discriminating between clear
and unclear teachers

Cronbach's alpha = .94

28 items:

“My teacher in this class . . .”

Never, Sometimes, Mostly, Always, Not applicable

FINDINGS

My teacher in this class . . .

“Always” ranged from 85.5% to 20.6%

“Never” ranged from 0.2% to 8.2%

Not applicable to this class:

Goes over difficult homework problems on board – 49.4%

Shows us how to do the work – 16.1%

Gives us enough time to practice – 15.6%

Explains how to do assignments by using examples –
14.2%

FINDINGS

HIGHEST RATED

Answers our questions

Gives specific details
when teaching

Stresses difficult
points

LOWEST RATED



FINDINGS

HIGHEST RATED

Answers our questions

Gives specific details
when teaching

Stresses difficult
points

LOWEST RATED

Goes over difficult
homework problems
on board

Shows us how to
remember things

Explains something
and then stops so
we can think about
it

RELATED FINDINGS

Negligible relationship between mean summated score and

- instructor rank
- course subject
- student college of enrollment

Low relationship between mean summated score and

- number of times instructor has taught course
- number of years instructor has taught in college



RELATED FINDINGS

Low, negative relationship between mean summated score and class size

Negligible, significant relationship between mean summated score and student rank



DISCUSSION

Higher rated items focused on providing specific information, especially the key points

Higher rated items related more to the presentation of facts

Lower rated items focused on time – to think, to solve complex problems, to remember key points

Lower rated items related more to student engagement and reflection opportunity



DISCUSSION

Most students were juniors or seniors – but class rank was still a significant factor in clarity perception

No other student or instructor traits were significantly related to clarity perceptions



DISCUSSION

Need for workshops to address clarity teacher behaviors

**Need for individual consultation and coaching with
instructors whose summated scores were lower**

Potential to re-assess same classes in Spring 2013



THANK YOU!