**EE400D (Teaching Engineering): Classroom Observation**

Faculty/Instructor: Payman Arabshahi Date/Time of Observation: 09/27 11:30 – 12:50

Observer: Ziqiao Xu

Course Number (Course Title): EE496

Format Observed (Lecture, Lab, Quiz Section): Lecture

Number of Students Enrolled: 69 Number of Students Attending: 70

**Instructions**

*This observation worksheet contains both close-ended (Likert Scale) questions and open-ended (descriptive) questions regarding what the instructor is doing during the observed time period (session) and what the students are doing. Not all behaviors or activities are covered in the close-ended questions; those activities that are not included in the close-ended questions can be integrated into the open-ended questions. Please highlight your answers in a different, but legible color, minimize white space, and provide clean and consistent formatted in the completed observation.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| During the Observed Session: | Not at All | Somewhat | Satisfactory | Outstanding |
| The instructor provides objectives for the class session (written, verbal, or both). |  |  | X |  |
| The instructor relates the session content to learning outcomes for the course. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor uses visual aids that are clear, organized, and relevant. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor uses practical, “real-world” examples to support teaching. |  |  | X |  |
| The instructor refers to the relevant portions of the textbook, reading, or other supplement. |  |  |  | X |
| The instructor uses humor effectively to promote student engagement and rapport. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor answers questions well and demonstrates knowledge of the subject. |  |  |  | X |
| The instructor shows clear interest or enthusiasm in teaching. |  |  | X |  |
| The instructor uses student names. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor asks specific questions. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor pauses after asking a question. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor asks questions of students that result in responses from students. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor changes gears periodically from one style of teaching to another. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor engages students periodically through think/pair/share, problem solving, or other active learning exercises. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor uses guided notes. |  |  | X |  |
| The instructor involves students periodically in what is to be covered during the session. | X |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| During the Observed Session: | Not at All | Somewhat | Satisfactory | Outstanding |
| The instructor uses more than one way to explain problems or concepts. | X |  |  |  |
| The opening of the class session gets students’ attention. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor provides a summary of what has been covered and accomplished at the end of the observed session. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor provides a preview of the next session or ideas of what to consider for the next class at the end of the observed session. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor could be easily heard. |  |  | X |  |
| The instructor moves around in the classroom and refrains from standing/sitting in one place. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor uses analogies or metaphors to relate the concepts to students’ experience. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor emphasizes key points throughout the observed session. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor makes eye contact with students. |  |  | X |  |
| The instructor uses open (not closed) body language during the observed session. |  | X |  |  |
| The instructor engages in behaviors that develop rapport and trust with the students. |  |  |  | X |
| The instructor relates the material/concepts to personal or societal concerns. |  |  |  | X |
| The instructor is available before class. | X |  |  |  |
| The instructor is available after class. |  |  |  | X |

What types of visual aids (dry-erase board, chalkboard, powerpoint, etc) does the instructor use during the observed session? How are these visual aids used?

The instructor uses the syllabus on the Canvas website and several Powerpoints during the session. He projects the visual aids onto the screen and uses them as the guidelines for the lecture.

In your opinion, what was the best/most effective teaching moment observed in this session?

The most effective teaching moment for me is when the professor informs the students about the NDA form that companies may let them to sign and ask the students not to sign it. He adamantly states his position that the university cares about student’s intellectual property and promises to protect the students from any potential legal issues against companies. During this moment, he clearly shows the potential danger that might exist in their future career while providing solid support that students won’t be afraid of the danger.

In your opinion, what was the most unique teaching moment observed in this session?

At the start of the lecture, one of the students asked the professor to turn on the microphone to better hear him, which is a moment that is not so common in teaching. I think how the professor reacts to it is remarkable: He uses a humor first, and tells the students the plan if the microphone is not working while trying his best to turn it on at the same time. Finally, he successfully turns on the microphone without letting most students feel distracted.

In an organized paragraph with complete sentences, describe what the instructor did throughout the session (150-250 words).

Even if the class session I observe is the first class of the quarter, I can immediately recognize that the professor’s teaching style is strongly related to the structure of the course. Different from the majority of college courses, this course is more like an information session that the students only get to know details about a project and do not learn textbook knowledge or take exams in this course. The course only meets once for an 80-minute session, which is short for a 2-credit class. Therefore, the professor chooses a style that he lectures for the majority of the time without much interaction with the students or affluent open body language. The professor lectures in a moderate pace to cover the massive information needed to cover, and allows little room to interrupt the flow. The professor doesn’t expect the students to know anything about the course content in advance, and that probably explains why he doesn’t ask interactive questions to students. The purpose of the course is to inform the students everything imminent while participating in the project, and it requires less critical thinking or application abilities, which allows the lack of active learning experiences to make sense. Despite many characteristics of efficient teaching are missing in this lecture, the professor does a good job in being responsible and showing support for the students on the university’s standpoint. The professor is also an expert in using real stories that he has experienced or witnessed to enhance the point he mentions.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| During the Observed Session: | None | Few | Some | Many | Most |
| Students maintain attention toward the instructor (for example – eye contact). |  |  |  | X |  |
| Students remain awake and alert during the observed session. |  |  |  |  | X |
| Students are using their cell phones or other electronic devices in activities unrelated to class. |  | X |  |  |  |
| Students are over one minute late to class. |  | X |  |  |  |
| Students pack up early at the end of class. |  | X |  |  |  |
| Students are reading the newspaper or doing other non-electronic activities unrelated to class. | X |  |  |  |  |
| Students interact with the instructor before class. | X |  |  |  |  |
| Students interact with the instructor after class. |  |  | X |  |  |
| Students initiate questions. |  |  | X |  |  |
| Students respond to questions posed by the instructor. | X |  |  |  |  |
| Students ask follow up questions. | X |  |  |  |  |
| Students participate in class when asked to do so by the instructor. | X |  |  |  |  |
| Students are taking notes. |  | X |  |  |  |

In your opinion, how would you best describe students’ interest in the observed session?

In the observed session, the students are showing strong interest in the course content because most of them hope to success in the project introduced in the course. However, almost none of the students show real enthusiasm to the course because there are theoretically no knowledge taught in this course. The students are interested in this course in a way that they don’t want to miss out anything that can help their projects.

In your opinion, how would you best describe students’ affect (emotion) in the observed session?

I think concerned is a great word to describe the students’ affect. All the students know the importance of the course content, and that results in different behaviors. Many students try their best to focus, while others are clearly worried about the stress of the project. Some students are bored because of the lack of interactive learning experiences.

In an organized paragraph with complete sentences, describe what the students were doing during the observed session (150-250 words).

Similar to the professor’s style, the students in this course show many interesting behaviors that relates to the course structure. One phenomenon that rarely happens in a college classroom is that almost no student takes notes during the class session. The students are focusing on the content of the lecture, but everything being lectured is informative that requires no extra effort to memorize. The students are also active in a controlled manner that I observe some of the students save their questions until the end of the lecture instead of interrupting the instructor. I assume that this is because that the instructors rarely pauses during the lecture or the questions that may arise in this course are much more likely to be personal than other courses. Since the course counts for only 2 credits and the knowledge taught in the lecture is easy to comprehend, different activities that relate to being bored appear on several of the students, including working on other courses or projects on their laptops, texting messages on their cell phones, and sleeping. However, most of the students follow the instructor tightly and carefully listen to every notable information during the lecture. Many of the students appear to be curious about and motivated by the course material, especially the plan for the incoming project, because the content in this course is completely new for everyone in the classroom.

Are there any items that you believe should be added to this classroom observations worksheet? If so, please describe.

I learned an interesting fact about the school’s course system that a 4-credit course requires 4 hours of lectures and 16 hours of work outside classroom every week.