

Memorandum

Subject: Peer Teaching Evaluation for Ms. Jeanette Dillon

Class: TCOM 2620 Interactive Radio Production, 018 West Hall, November 13th, 2013.

To: Dr. Louisa Ha, Chair, Dept. of Telecommunications

From: Sung-Yeon Park, Associate Professor, Dept. of Telecommunications

Cc.: Jeanette Dillon

In-class observation

Even though the class was held relatively early in the morning, it was well attended and the students appeared to be ready to learn.

13 students attended the class on the day of my visit. Of the 13, everyone came on time and was ready for the class, except for 1 student who arrived 3 minutes after the class began.

Overall, I found Ms. Dillon to be a highly seasoned teacher.

On the day of my observation, Ms. Dillon started her class with "Actuality assignment review." She walked the students through the Canvas course site to clarify the assignment. She provided very detailed instruction on how to do the assignment. She even remembered who amongst the students previously asked about a subject related to the assignment. She showed a good judgment of how much freedom she should allow students and where she should use a more standardized approach in evaluating the assignment. She also handled a sticky question regarding copyright infringement issues very well.

Ms. Dillon led a student-centered class where everyone was encouraged and felt comfortable in contributing to the class discussion.

Ms. Dillon knew all of her students by their first name and created an environment where they felt very comfortable and were able to focus on learning. One student was very engaged and interacted a lot with her, which Ms. Dillon sometimes took as an opportunity to move the class discussion onto a related and important subject. She tried very hard to engage other students as well.

Based on my observation, I also concluded that Ms. Dillon put a lot of time and effort to prepare for her classes.

The flow was seamless throughout the whole class time. She organized the PPT file to highlight every point she was making. She even created PPTs to promote Two TCOM 4690 courses the Department Chair asked all instructors to mention in their classes. Although the two courses were not directly related to the course at hand, her willingness to accommodate the request and even invest her time to create the PPT files demonstrated that she is a team player. When teachers collaborate with one another, students can move through the curriculum more efficiently, with better learning outcomes.

Suggestions

I consider experience and control more important qualities of a teacher than sharing a cultural code with undergraduate students. At the same time, I also believe that there are ways to make up for the cultural gap.

For example, she played an excerpt of "Prairie Home Companions," as an example of "dramas and performance." Unfortunately, the example did not resonate with the students as well, although it helped me understand the concept immediately. Maybe she could have students bring examples and mix with hers. In addition, when students bring up some examples that they are more familiar with, she could veer off from her prepared materials and play other clips more spontaneously.

Another area that requires more attention from her is student engagement in the class. Although they contributed to the class discussion, less than half of the students had the textbook or some note-taking tool in front of them. The majority of students were sitting there, listening and talking, but not making notes or marking on their books. At the end of the semester and beyond, they would need some references to revisit the lessons and having some rules regarding the use of textbook and/or note-taking will help students build their own reference library.

Syllabus & Course Organization

The syllabus clearly demonstrates her experience and knowledge of the craft. It is very thorough and well organized. In particular, the learning outcomes are one of the best I have seen.

Overall, I am very impressed with Ms. Dillon's grip on the course subject, care for students, and efforts to prepare for the class. I would like to have her continued contribution to the pedagogical mission of the department.