Section VIII—Communication

Record of Key E-mails
Updates, Reminders, and more FAQs

NOTE – UNLIKE THE OTHER SECTIONS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO ADD INFORMATION TO THIS SECTION

Updates, Reminders, and more FAQs

July 26, 2016

During the afternoon Friday August 12 you will be participating in an Orientation TBL (team based learning activity). Your I-Clickers will be required during this activity. In addition you are expected to have read the following three readings before the TBL session. This is very important.


HelpfulFeedback.pdf  Summary_TBL.pdf

Also please take note of the following message from our Office of Admissions.

Dear Incoming First-Year Student:
If you already completed the survey, please disregard this note.

We request your help in completing the Matriculating Student Questionnaire (MSQ) sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges. You should have already received your unique survey link via email. If you have problems accessing the MSQ please contact MSQ staff directly at msq@aamc.org and include your full name and AAMC ID in the message.

Please note that your participation is strictly voluntary; the MSQ is NOT an admissions requirement.

The MSQ is a valuable tool to help us evaluate the admissions process. Your responses are kept confidential and only aggregate data are reported to us. On behalf of our faculty and staff, I wish to thank you for your support and look forward to welcoming you next month.

Jorge A. Girotti, PhD
Director, Admissions
Associate Dean for Special Curricular Programs
June 22, 2016

Immunizations
Information regarding Castle Branch/Certified Profile

- More than 40 students in the Urbana site entering class have not yet registered with Castle Branch/Certified Profile using the Urbana code (UG32). **YOU MUST DO THIS.** Since the requirements tracked here are pre-matriculation requirements, you are expected to be registered and to be compliant before orientation begins, unless you have contacted us prior to orientation regarding your inability to do so.

- More than 30 students in the Urbana site entering class are registered with Castle Branch/Certified Profile using the Urbana code (UG32) but have zero of their requirements met. If you originally registered using the Chicago code and were then transferred to the Urbana code your immunization records may not be showing up in your new Urbana profile. To remedy this, please reattach the file from your “document center”. If you have trouble with this, please call 888-914-7279 and one of the Castle Branch/Certified Profile representatives will be able to walk you through the process.

- Keep your Castle Branch/Certified Profile records up to date. Please upload your documents as you progress, do not wait until all requirements have been completed. This allows us to verify that you are progressing as quickly as possible.

Health Insurance – coverage before August 21
In section VI we told you about the requirement that you have or purchase health insurance to cover the ten days from the first day of orientation (August 10) until student insurance coverage starts August 21. We now have confirmation that the cost for that coverage through the university will be $4 per day. To reiterate the information in Section VI, **student insurance coverage does not take effect until August 21.** Everyone must have some form of health insurance from August 10 through August 20. If you will be covered by family, please bring proof of coverage with you when you arrive for Orientation. If you will not have other coverage, please bring a check for $44 made payable to the University of Illinois when you arrive at Orientation. The deadline to submit this check to Student Affairs is Friday August 12 at 5:00 pm.

Criminal Background Check
You should now be able to select the August 10th Urbana campus date and site as your preferred location for fingerprinting. In the “Appointment Details” page for the week of “August 10 – August 16”, the option appears on page 2. At the bottom of the block schedule you will see “Viewing Page 1 of 2 / Next”. You have to click on Next
to move to page 2. The instructions are copied below. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Admissions.

Scheduling a Fingerprinting Special appointment in Illinois

*Livescan Fingerprinting with MorphoTrust USA is easy using our secure web scheduling*

**On-line Scheduling**
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
1. Go to www.IdentoGO.com
2. Click on the **State of Illinois**
3. Click on the **Online Scheduling** option.
4. Choose your language preference.
5. Enter your first and last name.
6. Choose your **Agency Name** from the drop-down menu:
   IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO SELECT THE CORRECT AGENCY FROM THE LIST. IF AN INCORRECT AGENCY IS SUBMITTED, RESULTS WILL NOT BE RECEIVED.
7. Under the heading (by the state map) “Please choose the region you will be in for your identification appointment”
   Click the drop down, and select **SPECIAL**
8. Click the “Next Week” button until you find the date range in which your special is scheduled.
9. Find your location on the list and then click on “click to schedule”
10. Pick an available time from the drop-down list and then click on “go” at the bottom of the list.
11. Select “Yes” or “No” regarding a Personal Review
12. Fill in all fields with Red asterisks *
   Click on the **Send Information** button
   Verify the appointment information, if all is correct; proceed by clicking **Go** at the bottom of the screen.
   If some of the information is not correct, please go into that section and change accordingly then proceed by clicking “go”
   Under Payment Collection
   Enter Payment Method
If using a Billing Account Number-enter in the number
Ignore the referral code box
Send Payment Information
Once the Payment information is verified an appointment
confirmation will appear on-screen

Please remember to bring a valid state or federally issued photo id
and any required forms from your state agency.

June 13, 2016

- We have received a number of phone calls from families asking about attendance at the White Coat Ceremony. Please remind your families that you will not have your White Coat Ceremony until second year, in order that it can take place at your clinical site (Rockford or Peoria). They will be invited at that time. The Welcome Ceremony that will take place during orientation does not include families.

- With the exception of a few days, Nora will be out of the country from June 16 until July 18. Please DO NOT SEND EMAIL to her address as she will not have email access. Please send any questions to mspo@illinois.edu

- Some of you have encountered the problem discussed in section I and on Facebook of apartments not being available to you until July 17 or 18. We want to give everyone the opportunity to get properly settled. To facilitate this there will not be any first year classes or activities on Thursday August 18. Please use this day to set up utilities and complete other moving-in activities.

- Thank you to those of you who have already tried to complete the consent form and information form (Section IV: Checklist and Contact Information), and I am sorry that it is not yet available. Our IT folks have told me that you will not be able to access these links until your Net ID is activated.

- As you look at textbook costs we know it can be tempting to use illegally downloaded materials such as illegal PDF copies of textbooks. As medical students we expect you to adhere to all laws and policies. We want to remind you that using or sharing materials without the author’s permission is also violation of the Student Code of Conduct. UIC and UIUC have clearly defined your responsibilities in regards to this issue (this includes peer-to-peer sharing). The University has a number of resources at your disposal should you want to learn more. The library staff is also happy to connect you with resources that are consistent with copyright policy.
May 31, 2016
We in Urbana do not know if your admission file is complete. If you want to know if
your immunizations are complete please check Certified Profile. If you want to know
your status for any other admissions requirements you need to contact the Office of
Admissions in Chicago.

**I was looking over the textbook list and was overwhelmed to say the least. Is there any**
resources/tips/advice from past M1s about which books are most helpful and which you may
not need? Additionally, is there a site or resource where past M1s are trying to sell their
textbooks from their M1 year? Just trying to get a handle on what seemed like an endless
(and no doubt very expensive) list of textbooks.

Good question. A few students do sell their books after M1 year but most
do not. You certainly do not need to purchase all of the textbooks.
Especially with a class like physiology, whether or not you want to buy a
certain textbook can depend on whether you want a reference book, a
review book, or want to buy something different from others in your
study group. Of course we have everything in our library.
ADDENDUM – We would recommend that you go to at least one class and look at
the books in the library before purchasing any textbooks.

**Record of Key E-mails**
(this is just for your convenience so you can easily find important information
previously sent)

(email sent May 31, 2016)
Dear New Medical Students – Hello again to those of you who have heard from me
previously. To those of you who are new, congratulations on your acceptance to the
University of Illinois College of Medicine and welcome to Urbana-Champaign! We look
forward to working with you as you begin your journey to becoming a physician.

I am writing to let you know that more information has been added to the link at
https://www.med.illinois.edu/students/m1/incoming/ You will now find the following
information:

- Section I: Before Classes Start
- Section II: Campus and Community
- Section III: Textbooks
- Section IV: Checklist and Contact Information
- Section V: Biochemistry
- Section VI: Staying Safe and Well
- Section VII: Student Affairs
Section VIII: Communication

Just as a heads up, there are two more sections to come. One will be on Academic Affairs topics and the other will include the orientation schedule. These sections will likely be posted late July. Note that titles, order, and timing of posting of some sections have changed slightly since my last communication.

The section on Communication is different from the others in that it will be updated periodically with answers to questions that come up on the Facebook page or by email, and that are relevant to others in the class.

I also want to apologize for confusing communication you have received. As UPR students you are different from students in Chicago in that:

- you are NOT required to complete a pre-matriculation drug test; if you have already done so please contact the Urbana office through mspo@illinois.edu (please put drug test in the subject line)
- you need to be registered through Certified Profile using the code UG32
  - if you have already registered using the Chicago code we will correct this administratively but please let us know at mspo@illinois.edu (please put background in the subject line)
  - if you are on the transfer list for Chicago, but currently assigned to UPR track, please complete all Urbana requirements and in the (unlikely) event that a transfer takes place we will administratively move your records
  - do not worry about the UIC status page with respect to your immunization completion; if you have been cleared by Certified Profile you are compliant
  - you do NOT need to complete a flu shot prior to matriculation
- you do NOT need to complete the M1 intake form at https://uic.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_8IYsMUnkOqpR3WR
- you DO NEED to let us know your white coat size
- Urbana M1 Orientation dates differ from the Chicago dates; our first day of orientation is August 10

Finally, you should be receiving instructions and information about the Criminal Background Check from the Office of Admissions in Chicago sometime this week. Stay tuned!

Nora J. Few, PhD, RD, MScPH  
Executive Assistant Dean  
Student Affairs and Medical Scholars Program  
University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign  
p (217) 333-8146  f (217) 333-2640  njfew@illinois.edu
Dear Incoming Medical Students

I am writing with reminders, new information, and a clarification. First of all, I reiterate that I am very happy to answer your questions. That said there are MANY of you and just one of me, so I’d like to remind you to check the online information before sending questions my way. The majority of the questions I have received are answered in this online information posted at https://www.med.illinois.edu/students/m1/incoming/

Currently information is posted in:
Section I — Before Classes Start
Section II — Campus and Community
Section III — Textbooks
Section IV — Checklist and Contact Information

Throughout the summer more information will be added in:
Section V — Orientation, Team-based Learning, Biochemistry
Section VI — Staying Safe and Well
Section VII — Events and Activities
Section VIII — Student Affairs, Registration, Professional Behavior
Section IX — Academic Affairs

My second reminder is to join the Facebook page. The title of the page is UPR class of 2020 – U of Illinois College of Medicine. I am posting housing opportunities on this page, some with deadlines. This is also a great place to talk to each other about housing and to share other information.

I visited the Campus Circle Apartments today. The common spaces are really extensive and lovely and it is quite close to the medical school (plus has a bus stop right outside the front door); I was very impressed. The furniture in the units is stylish, good quality and chosen well to fit student needs. Again, I am concerned about our early start date and your ability to obtain move-in dates at many locations before we begin orientation. Campus Circle is holding 20 beds, primarily in 4 bedroom units, for incoming medical students with August first occupancy but they can only hold them until May 31. If you are interested please contact Campus Circle ASAP (and let them know you were referred by Student Affairs at the College of Medicine because they are also giving medical students a bit of a special offer).
http://livecampuscircle.com/

The new information is that you will all be required to purchase a blood pressure cuff. No specific model is necessary (although Welch/Allyn has a good product) but it needs to be the manual type that fits of the arm and is inflated by pumping.
My clarification is about immunizations. Many of you have asked about when immunizations need to be completed. These are PREMATRICULATION requirements, so you are expected to have them completed before matriculation on August 10. I recognize that the timeline for Hep B will make it impossible for some of you to complete that requirements on time and that other complications may arise for individuals. If that is the case for you please let me know. Again, as stated in Section I of your incoming information, we will be using the company Certified Background to collect, verify, and monitor your immunization information. You can learn more and access the information form at www.medicine.uic.edu/admissions Part way down the page click on the red link Urbana Immunization Requirements. All requirements are outlined here. Please begin this immunization process immediately if you have not already.

Thanks everyone!

- Nora

On May 17, 2016, at 4:59 PM, Few, Nora J <njfew@illinois.edu> wrote:

Dear incoming M1 students –

As you know, the UPR track of the U of Illinois College of Medicine celebrates the White Coat Ceremony in the second year of medical school, at your clinical site. During M1 orientation we will have a ceremony welcoming you to the profession of medicine, and you will receive a white coat for use in clinical situations during your first year. For this, I need your jacket size no later than Tuesday July 5. Please email your name and your jacket size to mspo@illinois.edu

Women, please choose from the following sizes – zero, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28. If you would like to see what the jacket looks like, go to http://WWW.SCRUBSUNLIMITED.COM/metawomensconsultationcoat-1960.aspx

Men, please choose from the following sizes – 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 50, 52, 54, 56. If you would like to see what the jacket looks like, go to http://WWW.SCRUBSUNLIMITED.COM/metamensconsultationcoat-1961.aspx

I have received many more email and voice message questions than I can answer individually so I will answer the most common questions below.

I am emailing to clarify the correct process to set up the UIUC-specific NetID/enterprise ID. I already have a UIC NetID set up that allows me to access Blackboard and the UIC NetID services. But the instructions direct me to reset my password, a process that leads to a dead end.

You won’t be able to activate your UIUC NetIDs yet. You will receive an
email from our Urbana IT folks in July with the information needed to activate your UIUC NetID.

*When will I receive my UIN?*

The Office of Medical College Admissions in Chicago should already have notified you. Please check your correspondence.

Does receiving email from the Urbana site also serve as notification that I have been placed at the Urbana-Champaign campus? All communication I've received up until this point has been regarding the College of Medicine at Chicago.

If you have received email from Urbana then yes, you are on our list. If you believe this is in error, please contact the Office of Medical College Admissions in Chicago.

*How and when are we supposed to do our HIPAA/OSHA/Respiratory training?*

These trainings are not pre-matriculation requirements for Urbana. You will do your training during your time here.

*Do we have to pay for our background check or is there some kind of referral code we were given to use for it?*

You will receive more information about the criminal background check from Office of Medical College Admissions in Chicago. This information will tell you how to register so that the bill will be sent to the Office of Medical College Admissions. Part of your $100 deposit will be used to cover this cost.

*Is the flu shot also required? Certified Profile has it as a “to do”, but flu season is almost over. I have tried to get this corrected in Certified Profile. The flu shot is NOT required prior to matriculation. We will give you the appropriate seasonal flu shot in the fall.*

*The information I received from Urbana to access Certified Profile is not the same as what I received from Chicago. What am I supposed to do?*

You may have received information from Chicago telling you to use UG31 to place your Certified Profile order. That number is for Chicago only. All UPR students should order using UG32.

I am wondering if I will have to submit the same 10-panel drug test that was mentioned in a pre-orientation
email from Dr. Jorge Girotti that was sent to incoming UIC School of Medicine students. I have not seen it yet in the pre-orientation instructions for the UPR track.

A drug test is NOT REQUIRED for UPR track students before M1. Please also note that the letter you received from Dr. Girotti gave the Chicago order number for Certified Profile (see above) and the Chicago dates for Orientation (UPR M1 Orientation begins August 10).
MAKING FEEDBACK HELPFUL*
(The Organizational Behavior Teaching Review, 1988, 13 (1), 109-113.)
Larry K. Michaelsen (University of Oklahoma)
Emily E. Schultheiss (Westinghouse Electric Company)

In every aspect of our lives, we are constantly faced with the need to tell others—family, friends, associates, bosses, subordinates—about the effects of their behavior. Often, the goal of such feedback is to be helpful—that is either to encourage them to reinforce positive behavior or to eliminate behavior that is detrimental to them, to us or to our relationship. Unfortunately, not all feedback is helpful. If it is given at the wrong time or in an inappropriate way, it can be destructive to the recipient, your relationship with them or both.

In our view, giving feedback effectively is a skill that comes naturally to a few but can be learned by anyone if they are willing to focus on two things. The most important of which is asking themselves, "Why do I want to give this feedback?" If the intent is to let off steam or establish who's in charge, then the outcome is likely to be negative and the feedback probably shouldn't be given at all. If the intent is to help the other person improve themselves or strengthen your relationship with them then the second factor comes into play. This one has to do with the manner in which the feedback is given. Even when the intent is positive, the outcome is likely to be negative unless the process is handled skillfully. The following characteristics of helpful feedback should assist in this regard.

Helpful Feedback is Descriptive NOT Evaluative

Evaluative words, especially negative ones (e.g., "wrong," "bad," etc.) are likely to cause a defensive reaction even when the person already knows they have made a mistake. For example, telling someone that they have made a "careless" mistake is likely to elicit an excuse that places the blame, and therefore the need for change, on someone else (e.g., "They don't give me enough time to do the job right."). On the other hand, simply describing the consequences of their actions (e.g., "Joe was upset when his order didn't arrive on schedule.").

Feedback is more descriptive and less evaluative when you "own" it by clearly labeling it as an opinion. For example, an un-owned "That's wrong" is a direct pronouncement of the inadequacy of the receiver's position and the instinctive response would be to defend themselves by reinforcing the merits of their point of view rather than examining the givers' views. By contrast, "owned" statements such as "I disagree," and even "I think you're wrong," are more likely to prompt further discussion because they describe the giver's position and, as a result, are invitations to compare points of view. Thus, it would be much more helpful to say "I was angry (surprised, upset or whatever) that you disagreed with me in the meeting. I thought you'd have been more supportive based on our discussion at lunch," than to say "You were being twofaced when you disagreed with me in the meeting," even though both statements clearly provide feedback about your displeasure.

Helpful Feedback is Specific

The more specific the feedback, the more information it contains. In trying to help someone learn how to type, say "you are using the correct finger on all but two of the letters of the alphabet" would be descriptive and minimally evaluative but not specific enough to be of much help. "You are striking the Y and the N with the left instead of the right forefinger," would be even less likely to be seen as evaluative and would be specific enough to be useful. Similarly, the statement "I saw your interactions with me in this group as being quite brief so that I didn't really understand what you were trying to say," is descriptive, non-evaluative, and owned by the giver but is also fare more general (and proportionately less helpful) than the statement "...I had a hard time understanding your point about Bill's next assignment. I think my problem was that I didn't have enough information to tie things together."

Helpful Feedback is Honest and Sincere

Fear of eliciting a negative reaction often prompts us to "sugar coat" feedback in one of two ways. One is starting with a complement intended "soften-up" the receiver. Thus, for example (even though we think it's a bad idea) we might say, "That's a good idea, but..." in hopes that the receiver will be receptive to what follows the "but." Unfortunately, doing so creates the impression that things are OK when they really aren't and when the truth comes out (and it almost always will), the receiver: a) often loses confidence in the sender's credibility and, b) sometimes reacts even more negatively because he or she feels they have been misled. We recommend, giving the descriptive negative feedback first (e.g. I'm still concerned about..."), followed by the praise (e.g. "On the other hand, I agree with/liked...). That way, you can get your point across and, at the same time, actually increase the credibility of the feedback. The second way we try to "sugar coat" negative feedback is by "beating around the bush" by adding a lot of unnecessary verbiage. The problem with this approach is that the feedback often comes across as insincere because it sounds rehearsed. Thus, you should get right to the point (NO extra words) and use every-day language (i.e., normal for you and appropriate to the setting).

Helpful Feedback is Expressed in Terms Relevant to the Receiver's Needs

Even though a particular behavior is highly undesirable from your point of view, your feedback is likely to be ignored unless it is given in terms that are important to the recipient. For example, depending on their needs, telling a subordinate, a peer, or even a boss that "I thought the way your treated Susan was unprofessional," might have a dramatically different effect than asking "Were
your aware that Susan was so upset she was in tears and is thinking of quitting because she feels you were too critical of her?" Some might respond because they are concerned about maintaining their "image" and feel that Susan’s reaction was her problem. Others might not care about their own "image" but be highly responsive because of Susan’s reaction. The key is that we are more likely to respond to feedback that is stated in terms of issues that we have strong feelings about.

**Helpful Feedback is Timely**

In general, the more immediate the feedback; the more helpful it will be. In part, this is because immediate feedback tends to be much more specific since the details of the situation are more apparent than they would be at any later point in time. In addition, delayed feedback often causes resentment because it may sound like a “Monday morning quarterback.” This is because the recipient may feel that he or she could have minimized problems by making on-the-spot corrections if you had spoken up earlier.

Even though immediate feedback is generally desirable, one caution is in order. There may be situations in which the receiver’s needs may make it necessary to postpone feedback until it can be given a different setting. For example, bosses who need to be seen as being "in charge" will invariably respond defensively when anyone attempts to give them negative feedback in any kind of a public setting even though they often respond favorably to a "one-on-one" conversation at a later point in time. Similarly, someone who is very upset or angry is not likely to be open to feedback until they have had the opportunity to calm down.

**Helpful Feedback is Desired by the Receiver**

One of the most critical aspects of giving feedback is being able to tell when those who need it are ready to receive it. In part, this is because imposing feedback on someone who isn’t ready for it is more likely to damage your relationship with the recipient than to provide him or her with helpful insights. This, two important questions arise: (1) How can you tell whether or not someone is ready to receive feedback and, (2) What, if anything, can you do when you think someone needs feedback and doesn’t appear to be aware that they need it?

With respect to the first question, a number of things can help. Most people give both nonverbal and verbal cues. For example, both body position (turned away) and such things as attempting to redirect the conversation are warnings about giving negative feedback. The better you know the person, the easier it is to read their cues particularly when they trust you enough so that they don’t feel like they need to be "on guard" in your presence.

Unfortunately, having a close relationship with someone often leads us to assume that our feedback will be more welcome than it turns out to be. As a result, the only time you can be sure that it is "safe" to give negative feedback is when the recipient specifically asks for it.

What can you do when you feel that someone would benefit from feedback but doesn’t appear to be aware that they need it? One key is patience. In many cases simply waiting for an invitation for your input will provide plenty of opportunities. In situations in which waiting is too costly, the best option is to ask the person if they would like you to give them feedback. However, if they express any hesitancy, you should attempt to understand and resolve the reasons for their reservations before actually moving ahead with the feedback.

**Helpful Feedback is Usable**

Feedback is useful only when it relates to something over which the person has control. Feedback is useless when it is about: (1) personal attributes such as race, sex, age, physical size or even previous experience and, (2) opportunities that have already been missed (i.e., something someone should have done but didn’t). The problem with both is that the person can’t do anything about them even if they want to. As a result, giving feedback based on these kinds of issues is not only useless but is likely to cause resentment (or worse).

**Summary**

We have outlined seven variables that determine whether or not feedback will be helpful on one hand or ineffective and possibly even harmful on the other. Our comments can be summed up in the following six "Characteristics of Helpful Feedback." Helpful Feedback is:

1. **Descriptive**, not evaluative, and is "owned" by the sender.
2. **Specific**, not general.
3. **Honest and sincere**.
4. **Expressed in terms relevant to the self-perceived needs of the receiver**.
5. **Timely and in context**.
6. **Desired by the receiver**, not imposed on him or her.
7. **Usable; concerned with behavior over which the receiver has control**.

**A Concluding Note**

One final general rule concerns the communications process itself. Feedback cannot be helpful if it is not heard or is misunderstood. Thus, it is always a good idea for the person giving feedback to check, explicitly, with the receiver, to make sure that the receiver heard and understood what you were trying to communicate. One of the most effective ways of accomplishing this is by asking the receiver to restate what he or she thought you have said.

*This article is based on ideas from an article that originally appeared in the 1971 NTL Reading Book: Laboratories in Human Relations Training, Rev. Ed. and has appeared in slightly modified form in a number of other places.*
What is TBL?

Team-Based Learning – A special form of collaborative learning using a specific sequence of individual work, group work and immediate feedback to create a motivational framework in which students increasingly hold each other accountable for coming to class prepared and contributing to discussion.

Michael Sweet

Paradigm Shifts

- Course goal shifts from knowing to applying
- Teacher shifts from "sage on stage" to "guide at side"
- Students shift from passive to active
- Responsibility for learning shifts from instructor to student

TBL dramatically shifts the focus of classroom time from conveying course concepts by the instructor to the application of course concepts by student teams. In the TBL process, students acquire their initial exposure to the content through readings and are held accountable for their preparation using a Readiness Assurance Process (RAP). Following the RAP, the bulk of class time is used to practice applying content in a series of team application exercises. The components of TBL are very adaptable to many situations, disciplines and classroom types.

Four Key TBL Design Principles

- Large teams are required (5-7); teams should be diverse and permanent.
- Accountability for student pre-class preparation and contributing to team success
- Students make complex decisions that require the use of the course concepts that can be reported in simple form
- Frequent and timely feedback must be given to students.

Instructional focus shifts to learning how to use course concepts

TBL shifts the bulk of content acquisition out of the classroom and gives students the responsibility for gaining the initial understanding of course concepts through the Readiness Assurance Process. With TBL, students spend the bulk of class time in the application of course concepts to problem-solving. This is in contrast to the traditional lecture model, where the bulk of classroom time is spent conveying course content and team application assignments are most often completed outside of the classroom.

By shifting application activities into the classroom, the students can better use the expertise of the instructor and get more immediate feedback on their decisions and thinking process.

Class Time

- Initial Knowledge Acquisition
- TBL Application and Problem-Solving
- Lecture Content Transmission
- Application Activities

In a traditional course when a student team completes an application assignment, the instructor often only gets to view the final product and therefore has limited opportunity to provide students with timely feedback as their application assignment progresses.

By contrast, since TBL application activities occur in the classroom, there are opportunities for rich and detailed feedback from both peers and the instructor.

Typical TBL Module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readiness Assurance</th>
<th>Application Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 1.5 hours</td>
<td>2 to 5 Class Periods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Readiness Assurance, the instructor leads the class through readings, working on initial knowledge acquisition, and facilitating Mini-lecture discussions. In Application Activities, teams work together to apply concepts covered in the Readiness Assurance activity.
The Readiness Assurance Process (RAP) occurs at the beginning of each major instructional unit. The RAP ensures that students are held accountable for completing the pre-class reading and have acquired the foundational knowledge that they will need for the in-class team work that follows.

At the first class meeting of a module, a multiple-choice test (15-20 questions) is given. It covers key concepts and important foundational knowledge from the readings. The test is first taken individually and then immediately re-taken as a team test using the IF-AT (Immediate Feedback Assessment Technique) "scratch and win" testing cards. At the completion of the team test, teams are encouraged to "appeal" incorrect answers for extra marks. The appeal process requires teams to look up the "right" answer and complete a written form that is only considered after the class meeting. The appeals process pushes students back into the readings, right where they are having the most difficulty. Following the appeals process, the instructor provides a short clarification in the form of a mini-lecture. The focus of this clarification is often informed by the item analysis from the individual tests (if tests are scanned in real-time in the classroom).

Readings typically consist of 30-50 pages (textbooks, monographs, reports, and papers). It can be worthwhile to provide a reading guide if the students are new to reading the literature of the discipline. "Less is More" with readings. Students tend to do no reading at all when page counts get too high. They seemingly devote a fixed length of time to reading, no matter the length or complexity of the readings, so use their attention wisely.

The Individual Readiness Assurance Process Test (IRAT) typically consists of 15-22 multiple-choice questions. The IRAT holds students accountable for acquiring important foundational knowledge from the readings that will prepare them to begin problem-solving in subsequent class sessions. The questions are typically written at Bloom's levels, remembering, understanding, and applying. The test is normally administered using scantron, but a scanner is not required.

The Team Readiness Assurance Process Test (TRAT) is completed in teams using the same test as the IRAT.

In the TBL classroom, the bulk of class time is spent having student teams solve and discuss relevant, significant problems. Structuring the problems around the TBL 4S's lets you leverage the power of team processing without many of the problems (like social loafing) that are inherent in other forms of small-group work learning. The structure of the TBL activities gives individuals, teams, and the whole class many opportunities to reflect and get feedback on the specifics of their thinking and their process for arriving at their answer. The activity reporting allows students to engage with a diverse set of perspectives and approaches to problem-solving.
Why TBL Works

Teams focus on making decisions

Having TBL assignments based on discussion and decision-making, and not building lengthy product previews many of the undesirable group behaviors common in "divide and conquer" product based assignments. Many traditional group assignments are actually individual assignments, with little reason for student interaction, except at final product compilation.

Teams problem-solving improves

Teams quickly switch from voting/compromise to real problem solving as they get to know and trust each other. Birmingham and Michaelsen (1999) found that two thirds of teams (in 152 teams) started by using voting and compromise to avoid decision-making conflict early in team development and that NO teams used voting or compromise after only 5 test together. Focus changed from "who is right" to "what is right!"

Activities progress through Bloom's levels

Since the primary course goal in TBL shifts from conveying course content to helping the students learn how to apply course concepts to solving relevant, interesting and significant problems, the TBL instructional sequence naturally progresses to higher Bloom's levels as individuals progress through the modules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creating</th>
<th>Evaluating</th>
<th>Applying</th>
<th>Understanding</th>
<th>Remembering</th>
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Bloom's taxonomy: The initial acquisition of content and important foundational knowledge occurs during the Readiness Assurance Process which has the students progress through Remembering, Understanding and into the simple Applying level of Bloom's taxonomy. The Application Activities can take students through the higher Bloom's levels of Analyzing, Evaluating and Creating. The whole class discussions following the simultaneous posting in the Application Activities give the students the opportunity to articulate and examine their own thinking, to explore a variety of different perspectives, and finally arrive at a socially verified version of the "truth" or optimal solution.

Teams outperform best member

By reviewing student performance part way through the semester you can send a powerful message about the effectiveness of team work.

In thePast 20 years, over 99.9% of the teams have outperformed their best member by an average of nearly 14%. In fact, the worst team typically outperforms the best student in the class. Michaelsen et al, 1989

Attention focuses on harder concepts

As students progress through the Readiness Assurance Process, there is a natural shift in instructional focus to the harder, more difficult concepts. This shift is caused by the underlying structures in the Readiness Assurance Process. The differential attention on more difficult concepts begins in

the Team Readiness Assurance Test. During the TRAT, the teams will often work on questions, accepting consensus when it exists and quickly moving on. On more difficult questions, where there is no simple consensus, they will discuss for a longer period of time. The length of the discussion is affected by the overall difficulty of the question and the underlying concepts. Each time the team scratches off the IF-AT card and does not find the correct answer, they return to the question for further discussion. Following the TRAT, the teams are encouraged to appeal incorrect answers. This pushes the teams into further discussions and back into the reading material, exactly where they are having the most difficulty. Once the Appeals Process is complete, the instructor can provide a targeted mini-lecture on the most troublesome concepts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Easy Concepts</th>
<th>Hard Concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Readiness Assurance Test</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Readiness Assurance Test</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeals Process Research &amp; Intra-team discussion</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini-lecture Instructor Clarification</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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Works in large class settings

TBL was originally developed by Larry Michaelsen, at the University of Oklahoma Business School when his classes went from 40 to 120. He was unwilling to give up the effective outcomes that were possible in the smaller class using Socratic discussion. When he first tried TBL, he was surprised at how effective it was. TBL is now routinely used in large classes (up to 400, but more typically 120-150 Students with a single facilitator) and is even possible in difficult classroom spaces (i.e. tiered lecture theatres). Bottom line is - give students something compelling enough to work on and they will ignore the limitations of the room.

Can Large Classes Be an Asset?

What was the impact of the large class size on what you gained from taking this course?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped more than it hurt</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped and hurt</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurt more than it helped</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurt a great deal</td>
<td>2%</td>
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Michaelsen. Knight, Fink, 2002

www.tlcollaborative.org