



RESEARCH
SNAPSHOT

Teaching-for-learning (TFL):
A model for faculty to advance student learning.

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Purpose

This article introduces a model—Teaching-for-Learning (TFL)— to help faculty “engage in a systematic and continuous process of exploring and testing various teaching and assessment practices to ensure the learning of their students” (p. 153-154).

What is Teaching for Learning (TFL)?

The Teaching for Learning (TFL) model is “an inquiry-based approach to enhancing the learning of all students through systematically connecting teaching practices, assessment practices, and student learning experiences in light of course-specific challenges” (p. 154). It is a continuous process of innovation and exploration that can be implemented at various stages during a course (e.g. a lesson, a module, a session), allowing for adjustments throughout the course, as opposed to being used solely for planning an entire course. Student experiences and teacher experiences, as well as the interaction between the two, are at the heart of this strategy.

In this method, faculty engage with the following elements (p. 162):

- Constructing a knowledge base
- Designing learning experiences and teaching practices
- Hypothesizing their effect on students’ learning experiences (and, in turn, learning outcomes)
- Applying these teaching practices within the course and testing their effectiveness in enhancing student learning.

The TFL model is comprised of the following six steps (p. 158):

1. Identify course-specific challenges: Specify learning outcomes; explore student characteristics and proficiencies; identify challenges to address through teaching-for-learning
2. Explore and construct a relevant knowledge base: Review literature; collect peer and student perspectives; reflect on personal experiences
3. Hypothesize and design teaching practices: Review course challenges; identify and design teaching practices that are responsive to challenges and in line with stated learning outcomes
4. Hypothesize and design relevant learning experiences: Review course challenges; identify and design learning experiences that are responsive to challenges and in line with stated learning outcomes
5. Implementing and adapting teaching practices: Implement teaching practices for each course challenge; collect formative feedback; realign teaching practices as appropriate
6. Test hypotheses: Perform summative assessment of student learning; determine efficacy of teaching practices and learning experiences in light of assessed learning outcomes