

CTLT's Spring Semester 2006 Teaching Tip for May 3

The 3 Rs for Effective Teaching: Risk, Reflection and Renewal (Part 3)

INTRODUCTION

As educators, a fundamental role that we must take on is that of learner. We must constantly strive to learn what works best for our students, what doesn't and where to learn more because, as you know, all aspects of teaching and learning are constantly changing - the tools, the students, the knowledge base or content, and even ourselves. Accomplishing this goal of perpetual improvement toward effective teaching requires the consideration of a different set of "3 Rs" - risk, reflection and renewal.

As we enter the last weeks of the semester, the Center wanted to provide some food for thought on three aspects of aspiring to become a more effective teacher called "The 3 Rs Toward Effective Teaching." Today is the last installment, or third "R," on renewal.

RENEWAL

As we move further into spring, the season of re-growth and renewal, take some time to reflect back on your semester or year to consider what types of changes you'd like to implement for next year and beyond. Do you want to try a new teaching strategy? What about developing a research plan centered on your teaching effectiveness? Are there others in your department who want to meet regularly to talk about teaching strategies, effectiveness and student engagement? Do you want to start a teaching portfolio for reflection? Is it time to **make** the time to focus more on your teaching? Any of these changes allow opportunities for you to become renewed, invigorated and rejuvenated as you enter the summer or fall semesters.

Here are some other ideas for ways to renew yourself as an educator:

Ten Ideas to Encourage Renewal

(Courtesy of Lee I. McCann and Baron, professors in the Department of Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh)

1. **Collaborate** – team teach a course or design a research project
2. **Experience life as a student** – enroll in a course
3. **Enhance your office** – invest in a new chair, put new artwork on the walls, or turn your desk a new direction
4. **Get more involved in your community** – campus or otherwise
5. **Take time to reflect** – attend a teaching conference, read teaching journals or books, or keep a teaching journal
6. **Try a new approach** – include something fun for you and your students in each class period, change your assignments, or change your mode of delivery
7. **Create a network** of people with similar teaching or research interests, or with whom you enjoy spending time
8. **Get to know new faculty** – in and outside your department
9. **Invite guest lecturers** to your class, or volunteer to do the same for a colleague
10. **Temporarily exchange positions** with someone on another campus