

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Conducted by Dr. Linda B. Nilson, OTEI Director

Instructor: Garrett Stone, PRTM Graduate Student (gstone621@gmail.com)

Course: PRTM 345: Tourism Management

Place: A105 P&A Bldg.

Date: Monday, February 15, 2016, 10:10-11:00am

You started class right on time. You might consider opening a class with a cheery “Good morning!” to set a welcoming tone. You handled housekeeping at the start of class with dispatch. You gave helpful information about the upcoming test. It would allay some student fears if you gave a word range for the essay questions. Excellent that you furnished a study guide and had students working in groups to answer their own questions.

Thanks to one of your students, I was able to read the review questions. There were about 65 of them; that’s a lot! With a couple of exceptions at the end, all the questions seemed to be asking students to repeat (reproduce, paraphrase) the material given them in the readings and your lectures. As you know, this type of question requires only low-level thinking – that is, recall – and induces students to memorize the material and not really “think” with it. You might consider asking higher-level questions – those asking students to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate material – first in class to give them practice, then on the review/study guide, and then on tests.

You spoke softly, which helped keep the room quiet (necessary to hear you), but it may be difficult for students to hear you under certain circumstances. You will have to project your voice for the larger classes you’re bound to have in the future. I can help you learn how to do this to an extent, although I’m not a voice coach.

Very good that you tied the review/study guide questions to your students’ career.

When students asked you questions, you usually asked a question back to get them to recall material, come up with examples, or better explain their thinking. You got students to talk *a lot* and didn’t let them pressure you into giving them answers. You also asked other students to answer student questions. This is excellent teaching! You had students thinking beyond the review questions. You’re excellent at leading a discussion.

Your explanations were very clear. You used plenty of examples or obtained them from your students.

“The cornerstone of critical thinking is evidence.... gray areas.” Good that you explained critical thinking because students don’t know what it is. You tied critical thinking into the kinds of answers you want to see on the test. In fact, during the class, you were preparing student for more advanced questions than the review/study guide questions. This means you’ll be asking more than recall questions on the test.

You convey approachability and caring for your students. You also seem at ease with your class. No doubt your students really like and trust you. They were very respectful toward you. I saw no classroom incivilities.

To better command your students' attention, you might try to be more animated, energetic, and dramatic by increasing your vocal variety (in intonation and pace), using gestures, and moving around the classroom. Your speaking pace is perfect.

Very good that you used the board. You misspelled "sentiments." ;-)

Your discussion-leading skills are masterful. You ask all the right questions at the right time. You don't feel a need to keep control of the class or to put the spotlight on yourself. In addition, you give students every opportunity to participate. You know they learn by figuring things out themselves and speaking in class. This is very mature teaching!