Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies are the tools used by the instructor to deliver the content. Instructional strategies fall into two categories: teacher-centered and student-centered strategies. With teacher-centered strategies, the teacher assumes the responsibility for delivering the instruction to the student. Students are relatively passive learners.

Lecture

The most commonly used strategy because 1) planning time is limited, 2) lectures are flexible and can be applied to any content, and 3) lectures are simple. The most critical fact about lecture is that it puts students in a passive role.

Demonstration

The teacher shows students a process or procedure such as how to use a projector, a cooking technique, or a computer procedure. Involving students in demonstrations allows this method to be less passive.

Lecture-Discussion

A combination of lectures and instructor questioning. The instructor attempts to provide deeper meaning by linking content to students’ own experiences or by asking them how they might apply the content to a real situation.

Direct Instruction

Used to help students learn concepts and skills. There are various models of direct instruction, but all include similar steps: 1) Intro & Review 2) Presentation of new information 3) Guided practice 4) Independent practice.

Student-centered instructional strategies let the students construct their own meaning. The teacher’s role is that of the facilitator or guide. Students take an active role in their learning.

Discussion

Allows for student input and use of personal illustrations that help students build meaning. More difficult with large numbers of students.
**Case Studies**

Students are provided with problems and expected to research possible solutions to the problem. Sometimes called the problem-solving approach. Students may also be given real life situations or cases where they are to apply problem-solving techniques they’ve learned in the class. Useful for exposing volunteers to a wide-range of situations they may face.

**Simulations**

Simulations are meant to put the student in a "real" situation without taking the risks involved. They are meant to be as realistic as possible and students are able to experience consequences of their behavior and decisions.

**Role-Play**

Allows students to solve a problem while experiencing the view point of the character’s role they are playing. The roles and problem must be clearly defined. Very useful for volunteers who will be working with challenging clientele.

**Small Group Discussion**

Groups of 3-6 students discuss a question or problem together to develop a solution. A greater number of solutions may be generated and students get to know some of the other students in the classroom. Requires close observation by the instructor.