

Chapter 3: Apply It to Your Practice

Working individually or in learning teams, reflect on these questions, and implement the commitments to your practice (for more information on engaging with these questions, please see the section titled Space for Reflective Practice on page 9 in the introduction). As always, strive to move your reflection to action.

React to the Chapter

What are your key takeaways from this chapter? What was surprising to read? What did you connect with?

Evaluate Your Assignments for Clarity

Before feedbacking, make sure your assignment directions are clear and students know exactly what each one will assess. Answer the following questions to help you evaluate assignments, projects, presentations, and exams in your practice.

- Does the assignment tie closely to a meaningful objective?
- Is the prompt, or goal, clear to students?
- Do the instructions help students map out what they need to accomplish?
- Does the rubric clearly assess the intentions of the assignment?

Starting with just an assignment or two, experiment with the assignment prompt, directions, and rubric. Implement some tweaks or major revisions to make each one clearer and more usable for students.

Analyze Your Feedback for Compassion

Choose a group of student work that you have given feedback on. Read that feedback as if you were a student or a nonexpert in the class. Overall, does the tone of your comments present as positive and encouraging? Do the comments give specific advice for how to improve? Do you end on an upbeat note? Consider your feedback overall, and decide where you would like to tweak it for a more positive tone or more rubric-centered comments.

Practice the Four-Step Feedback Process

Instructors who use the four-step feedback process share that their grading has purpose, it goes quickly, and students receive it well. Like any good thing, this process takes practice. Choose an assignment, and experiment with using this process. What feels awkward as you try a new approach? What goes smoothly? Notice where you would like to tweak and practice using the process as it becomes a tool for connection and efficiency in your grading.

Be There

Being there for students includes an array of possibilities: simply being present, making space for important conversations, and building relationships through daily practices like feedbacking. Describe a time when you were there for a student and what it meant to both of you. What skills from that experience apply to other work in the classroom? What other opportunities do you have to be there for students in online and blended contexts?