

Strategy: Ending the Semester: Individual and Group Activities

Providing reflection opportunities for students at the end of the semester can provide many benefits for faculty and students including helping students recognize how much they've learned, synthesizing that knowledge, identifying future applications for knowledge, increasing retention of information, and collecting artifacts to share with future students in the course.

Origin

Brill, R. (2009). How to make course evaluations more valuable. Retrieved from <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-teaching-strategies/how-to-make-course-evaluations-more-valuable/>.

Connor, P. (2009). *Managing the end of the semester*. Retrieved from <http://teaching.colostate.edu/tips/tip.cfm?tipid=154>.

Mills, W. (2010). *A strong ending to the semester*. Retrieved from <http://www.wku.edu/teaching/booklets/astrongending.pdf>.

Panitz, T. (n.d.). End-of-semester self-evaluation. Retrieved from <http://www.oncourseworkshop.com/Staying%20On%20Course001.htm>.

Application

These ideas provide opportunities for end of the semester activities.

- **Concept map:** Have students create a model of the course material and write a 1-2 paragraph description of how the model relates to course content.
- **Reference letters for peers:** Have students write their peers letters of recommendation based on their experience with them in the course (works especially well for students who have worked together on group projects).
- **Handshake:** Shake students' hands and call them by name (if possible) as students leave class on the last day.
- **Letters to future students:** Have students write a letter to a future student in the course. Have them summarize the material, discuss study techniques and learning strategies, explain problem areas, and give a general introduction to the course.
- **Personal scavenger hunt:** Have students bring in objects that represent what they have learned and how they have changed during the semester.
- **Cover letter:** Have students write a cover letter reflecting on their growth in the course. Ask them to specifically address course concepts and issues as well as class activities and assignments.
- **Around the room review:** Write major course topics on large sheets of paper and place the sheets around the room at various stations. Pairs or group students travel around the stations, spending 1-2 minutes at each station, writing information about the topic that they can remember. They cannot duplicate information that is already there, but they can make corrections if needed. Then debrief each station as a large group.
- **Share what you learned:** Tell students what you've learned during the course.
- **Concept map:** Have your students create a concept map for the course.

