

## Evaluation

### Faculty Seminar on Learning and Teaching Excellence

**Spring 2003 /2004**

The following statements describe certain aspects of the seminar. Express your view by marking the appropriate position on the rating scale that best reflects it.

#### **Part I**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
SD	D	N	A	SA
1	2	3	4	5

	Mean 2001/2002	Mean 2002/2003	Mean 2003- 2004
1. The place/setting was supportive of discussion/reflection	4.3	4.3	4.3
2. The seminar materials/handouts were:			
i. Informative	4.3	4.3	4.3
ii. Interesting	4.2	4.1	4.1
iii. Difficult	2.5	2.2	1.8
2. The size of the group was reasonable	4.7	4.7	4.4
3. Having participants from different disciplines enriched discussions	4.6	4.7	4.8
4. The duration of the seminar weeks was sufficient	3.6	3.4	4.3
5. Time (5-7 p.m.) was convenient	3.7	3.7	4.1
6. The topics covered in the seminar were all inclusive	3.1	3.7	3.4
7. The seminar experience provided insights that might be helpful in my future teaching practices	4.2	4.5	4.2
8. The seminar met my expectations	3.7	4.0	3.9
9. The seminar provided 'pedagogical space' that*			
i. is both bounded and open	4.0	4.2	3.8
ii. is hospitable and charged at the same time	4.2	4.2	4.2
iii. welcomed both silence and speech	4.1	4.1	3.5

iv. invited the voice of the individual and the voice of the group	4.1	4.3	4.3
v. honored 'little' stories of the participants and 'big' stories of teaching/learning	4.0	4.3	4.1
10. The facilitators:			
i. created an environment supportive of reflection	4.0	4.3	4.1
ii. raised good questions	4.2	4.1	4.2
iii. were good listeners	3.9	4.2	4.2
iv. guided group discussion without being too directive	4.0	4.0	4.1
v. overall, they did a great job	3.9	4.3	4.4

\*Palmer's paradoxical tensions

**1. Which of the sessions was *most* useful? Why?**

Active and collaborative activities this is an approach that I feel would be very useful in my courses.

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Student-Oriented Methods I. Introduction of a number of skills & methods that I will use to involve students & obtain better learning objectives.

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Week 5. It was useful to me because I see a lot of group learning in our curriculum. I am trying to design courses to remedy that but do not have enough experience. This session gave me several ideas & tips.

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Teacher Oriented Methods I. Active and collaborative activities, very interesting & easy to implement & adopt.

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Assessment, ties with educational objectives.

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#### Session 4, Alternative Methods

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All of them were very useful. BUT, if I have to choose the "most" useful one I will chose the one about "reverse engineering" because I learnt a lot from it – namely to teach in an unorthodox way by starting from the conclusion and let the students discover their ways.

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Student Oriented Methods I (Collaborative Learning). I use this method in my teaching, and I feel that students learn better in a similar environment. Collaborative teaching is a more communicative and interactive approach in the classroom.

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Week 4 was quite useful since it addressed issues that were directly related to actual teaching issues. Of course, other sessions were of great use as well. Sometimes, however the material sounded more theoretical than practical.

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The session on "Handling Large Classes" was of most interest [week 2]. The reason why is the fact that I had been less effective in teaching large classes at AUB, rather that smaller groups. The other sessions, although very important & informative included information that I was more less familiar with & in the process of implementing.

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#### Student-Oriented Teaching Methods

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Week 2, 5 & 6. These provided me with ideas to use in my class.

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Session 2, primarily on sustaining attentiveness of a class – I was especially happy to learn about major's idea lecture" (was re-iterated in another session).

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Week 4 and 1-2 –5 – 6. The interaction, intercommunicative between facilitation and students were motivating.

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Alternative Methods of Assessing Student Learning Opened my mind to different ways of assessing students.

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Weeks 3, 4 & 6. Because most relevant for types of classes I have. i.e. most directly applicable.

**2. Which was least useful? Why?**

We spent too much time on the Introduction.

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Introduction. It offered too little new information for too long a time period.

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Today. I am learning nothing.

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PBL – Difficult to implement, needs a valid assessment. Needs a rewarding system from the administration. "Publish or Perish" may be is not advised on not practical for PBL Teachers!

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No significant difference.

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Institutional Profile: Dull presentation, too much accreditation process info., which was irrelevant to the seminar.

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I guess the introductory one was the least useful. No real info. Related to teaching/just policies.

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None

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Cannot say since all sessions were useful.

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The introductory session could be formatted differently. Also, AUB's students' characteristics, listed in the introduction session, should be kept in mind throughout the seminar series.

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First session – information about university, mission of AUB, etc..

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The first session was not particularly useful since it involved discussion on side issues.

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Week 1. Covered topics that were "old"

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Session 6/PBL – disappointing considering the "expert" label.

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The film because it was only a reportage and not a real exercise!

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I have a hard time choosing a least useful session so I will abstain.

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Week 2 – Because I do not handle large classes – (Although I have elsewhere)

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3. **Which topic do you think needed more time/information?**

None

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Student-Oriented Methods II. More time was needed for implementation & consequently clarification to the point of application of method in practice

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Probably all except the first.

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Collaborative activities.

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Grading policies

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Student – Oriented Methods; how to incorporate them in specific, practical ways.

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Grading/Assessing Students

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Assessment of student learning. There are lots of types of assessment that we should consider or address. Also, some questions were not answered because of the subjective approach to testing.

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The topics of the 1<sup>st</sup> session, which were presented as introduction, perhaps needed more time in order to get more thoroughly into the issue.

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“Student oriented methods” need to be sold more effectively. Faculty members need to be better convinced of their use. It is about time that such methods are implemented & AUB.

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PBL.

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Assessment of students and methods of encouraging students to be more active participants in learning.

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Dinner..... But, Seriously, not one topic fits this question. It would have been useful to have spent more time on both the student & teacher oriented method.

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Assessing Learning – session 4 was too short for content.

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Week 1 – we need to know more about present orientations and statements of the university as well as more about students’ profile.

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Alternative Methods of Assessing Student Learning.

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I guess every topic should be given more time as there were listing of items but not the best set of recommendation.

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Week 6 – Problem – based learning with more applications to humanities and social sciences.

**4. What did you like most about the seminar?**

Sharing and discussing ideas and experiences among faculty members from different faculties, with different experiences.

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Wrap-up. The dinner food was fantastic & the interaction warm.

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Meeting the rest of the faculty. Learning various techniques. Getting a better understanding of the educational system at AUB & MOST OF ALL, the -----  
- (you know.)

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All – Yet I believe to-Method I (teacher oriented methods I), was best.

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Stimulated to think about teaching issues, as they relate to my own teaching experience.

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The collegial, group-oriented atmospheres new ideas for activities & assessments.

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Open-minded unbound approach – for sharing experience.

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The seminar was helpful in dealing with the various aspects of teaching. Secondly, the seminar furnished a healthy and interactive atmosphere. The group was homogenous.

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In addition to the information and new insights, such seminars help to create a community atmosphere among the faculty from different departments and faculties.

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The ideas and methods presented & exchanged.

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Exchanging stories and meeting people from all over campus.

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Open discussion and learning from other instructors/experiences.

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It gave me ideas that can be used in class. I am already restructuring one class to incorporate these.

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It gave me an almost comprehensive structure, and few benchmarks, to measure against my teaching experience and to identify strengths, weaknesses and potential improvements. I also liked meeting different colleagues from different disciplines.

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The bonding and sharing and meeting with teachers from various faculties & departments on subjects and methods and experiences in teaching. And the fact that we had no homework.

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Informal discussions of things pedagogical.

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The lecture notes sent by e-mail & the summary found in the book.

It has raised lots of views, but no unique answers. It may be the case where no perfect answer exists. However it gives faculty the skills of handling various cases when they arise.

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It was varied. It addressed case issues. A pleasant atmosphere. Good food – and competent facilitators.

5. What did you *like least*?

Some interesting discussions had to be interrupted

Some ideas were not sufficiently developed

Some participants were monopolizing the floor

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Not having enough time to discuss many of the important issues at length.

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Wrap-up session

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Coverage of subjects is not comprehensive.

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The time commitment & difficulty of applying ideas to my discipline.

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The discussed methods on assessing students. I think we should reflect more on the student background and how to deal with it.

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Having the class or groups caught in “local optima” without the instructors/facilitators assisting the escape from circular discussions until much time had elapsed.

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Some stories.

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Control of discussion: At times it seemed that the facilitators were not able to guide the discussion due to the dominance of some participants

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The alternative methods for evaluating students. I thought it would have fit it a) part of student-oriented method.

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I would have liked more time for application and/or case-oriented discussions.

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Some interventions of students who were too heavy to put up with.

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The raising of issues or questions that were left hanging with no good answer. I understand that many of the issues had no single answer but the experience left me longing for answers nevertheless.

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I missed week 4.

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As usual, certain individuals participating tended to dominate discussions (not always) with examples and applications that were not applicable to all.

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6. Was the **listserv** a useful tool? Please elaborate

It is a useful tool but it was only used by organizers.

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Not having enough time to discuss many of the important issues at length.

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Not for me.

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No answer.

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I haven't used it.

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Unfortunately, I was not able to find time to use it effectively. Very good as a means of communication among group members.

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For me not really. We have not enough time actually during the week....

Perhaps my colleagues who are not going through the "first year" of AUB found it more useful.

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Yes.

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The summary of the seminars which were sent to the participants, is very useful since it enables one to go through the material again and again. It however, did not generate any exchange of idea through.

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Did not use it. I suppose if would be.

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Never used it for lack of time I would have liked to discuss issues relating to how we understand critical thinking. I am sure each of us has their own understanding of what we call critical thinking. How do we measure that? How are learning outcomes different from objectives (beyond the technical way of differentiating between them)? What are they really useful for?

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Yes!

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Did not use it.

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I did not use it beyond receiving the well-prepared session notes and presentations.

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Not really. Handouts discussions sharing practical experiences from various disciplines were more useful.

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I frankly did not spend time checking it.

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I didn't try.

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Yes. Kept me informed and whatever was missed would be provided to access and read in my own time.

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7. Suggestions for future seminars

It could be helpful to stress on the "how" of such methods.

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May be some of the readings & presentation could be presented before the sessions for more active participation.

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I don't think I know enough to make useful suggestions. I liked the present seminar & thank you for inviting me.

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- Support from the Admin. About adopting New Teaching Methods. May be a message from the administration. That PBL and other tools, are the way to go forward – To encourage teachers to adopt a new teaching system.
- May be we need to hold seminars at the Faculty Level then at the University Level.
- This series of seminars should be **A MUST** & **requirement** to all AUB Teachers.
- Teaching policy decision in implementations including appraisal & resource allocation need to be reviewed; assessment, & revised by AUB Administration. Well done

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- I missed the organizational aspects, e.g. individual teacher responsibility vs. institutional policies, think of grading policies.
- Tools and efficiency: How to implement tools, like web CT with respect to educational objectives., quality improvement may involve organizational effort, think of databases of materials, exam questions. Etc...

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- More alternative assessment models would be interesting.
- Acquainting people with basic education theory, i.e., learning styles. Not everyone knows the basic things about how people learn.

- Defining outcomes – some are challenged in this area.

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- More videos.
- To put more stress on PRACTICAL ISSUES?
- It is nice to know about “fantastic” techniques for better teaching. But “How to apply” them in another story. We face at least 2 problems:

1. Time
2. Students’ background

- I hope that for the next time these practical issue will be raised and discussed. Simply, we need help in order to apply what we have learnt.

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New perspectives for teaching should be sought.

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Perhaps a two-weekend seminar can be more practical in order to avoid long distance between early and late seminars, which always need to be correlated. As for the content and the method, I think, it was very useful and practical.

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Although difficult to do with peers, keep them under better control during discussions!

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Pay more attention to teaching of more moderate size classes, where the instructor need same help in terms of encouraging students to seek information and knowledge.

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Future seminars should target the same group for FOLLOW-UP. It would be informative to see who is applying any of the methods discussed. Then based on this follow-up future seminars can be more focused.

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- Spread over more time with a session every other week. This knows better background reading + application.
- Advanced Seminar with ability to apply methods in real time and courses currently taught by individual participants.

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- Share more experiences lived by each one of us.
- Address deeper issues
- Experience a PBL during the seminar come back to plenary and report; compare reports.....

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Add a session about grading (assigning the final course grade) and how best to do it.

We could have discussed the AUB policy on grades for example.

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- I would like to see a future session on grading. Currently AUB follows a percentile system while most US universities follows a letter grade systems. The same in Europe so why not AUB.
- Adding new ideas like, PBL is good, though it may not be applicable everywhere.

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I think the facilitators could be clearer with presenting the differences in learning and teaching assessment according to the different disciplines within the university.

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