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ABSTRACT

The findings of numerous empirically based research studies reflecting the views of teachers, students, and administrators can be used to identify a "core of techniques" associated with effective community college teachers. Community college teaching is generally more student-centered than four-year college instruction, with the choice of teaching method based upon the goals and learning styles of the students. Two studies conducted during the 1980's identify four teaching behaviors common to exemplary community college teachers: (1) they are highly organized, plan carefully, set unambiguous goals, and have high expectations of their students; (2) they express positive regard for their students; (3) they strongly encourage student participation; and (4) they provide students with regular feedback regarding their progress in the course and make specific remediation recommendations. These characteristics relate to behaviors and techniques rather than to disposition or personality traits. Effective teachers form partnerships with their students in order to meet course objectives, and they assume a major responsibility for student outcomes. Mastery learning techniques, especially the corrective/feedback process, are widely used. Community college teachers typically make course content relevant by relating their experiences, giving examples, and connecting course goals to the real-world expectations and experiences of their students. It is held, however, that these teachers need to become more actively involved in providing valid empirical evidence of their expertise through research and publishing. (26 references) (JSP)

ATTRIBUTES OF EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHERS
A Review of the literature

By

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OVERVIEW

The community college setting is uniike any other educational environment. It is a place where the art and science of teaching converge with the academic needs of a dynamic and diverse student population. Community college students bring to campus a rich mixture of ethnic cultures, a large span of ages, a variety of socioeconomic classes and a complex set of expectations and educational problems. How these two-year institutions respond to these academic challenges is of particular concern to academicians, scholars, researchers, and taxpaying citizens of every geographic area.

The responsibility for teaching the diverse range of students in a community college ultimately falls on the shoulders of the instructor. It is that person who has the most direct contact, and the assignment to connect the student with his/her educational aspirations. The axiom "if the student fails to learn, the teacher has failed to teach" seems to express wide agreement as to whom gets the blame when educational goals are not met. In this regard, teacher effectiveness has taken on renewed interest both within and outside academia - a trend that started in the 1970'S. Increased research efforts to define and evaluate effective teaching in community colleges has provided the impetus to look more closely at ways to improve college faculty. Koerin (1980) notes the rise of faculty development programs during the 1970'S and attributes this movement to decreased faculty mobility, competition among institutions for students, and demands by students, parents, legislators, and the public for more effective teaching. Reduced student enrollments

had the effect of limiting the demand for faculty, which in turr restricted their mobility. Since many institutions have a high percentage of tenured faculty (Koerin, 1980) there is more of a tendency for faculty to stay in one institution for a longer period of time. The result as Centra (1976) notes is that "faculty members can no longer rely on experiences in new institutions to enrich their teaching capabilities, and institutions can no longer depend on new faculty to revitalize their departments." The concern over the loss of quality in higher education is no less a concern today as in the 1970'S. Higher education is increasingly being scrutinized and demands that it be held accountable for the quality of education delivered has not abated in the 1980'S. It is quite probable this trend will continue into the next decade.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the concept of effective teaching as it relates to the faculty of community colleges. This paper will review the literature in an effort to determine the attributes of effective teachers, and what specific techniques they employ in and out of the classroom. A "core of techniques" relating to effective teaching will be identified and discussed. This paper will draw upon the findings of numerous empirically based research studies and will reflect the views of teachers, students, and administrators.

College teachers are frequently viewed as semi-autonomous professionals who negotiate and mediate among complex and sometimes contradictory task demands as they pursue goals of excellence and quality (Porter and Brophy, 1988). Principles

that increase the effectiveness of these professionals is a major concern and research plays an important role. The perspective of this paper reflects the view of Alford (1983) when she states that "Research lets us see how others teach....We can see the effects of their behavior, test our decisions against theirs, match our strategies against theirs, and gain insight into ourselves and our teaching."

TEACHING IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Unlike its counterpart in a four year college or university setting, community college faculty approaches its role of teaching differently. The research of Wilson, Gaffe, Dienst, Wood, and Barry (1975) indicate that the goals of education at the community college level relate to self-knowledge and preparation for further education, while at the university, and to a lesser extent at state colleges, mastery of a specialized body of knowledge is the educational goal. The teaching approaches of these two institutions also varies according to the mission. Community college teaching is more student-centered and frequently involves student participation in class discussion and through the use of individualized assignments. Achievement is evaluated relative to each student's ability. University teaching tends to be more subject-matter oriented, involving presentation through lectures and detailed notes, with student achievement evaluated by absolute standards (Wilson et al. 1975).

The typical community college instructor approaches the role of teaching in ways that are congruent with the student population. The particular choice of method should, according to

Lewis (1975), be based upon the number and characteristics of the students, the purpose of the course, and the special skills of the instructor. Wilson et al. (1975) support this assertion by noting that "studies have indicated that no one model or method of teaching is singularly effectve: the educational goals and the learning styles of the students determine the most effective methods." Community college teachers have a variety of teaching styles and methods available to them, although the literature strongly suggests that any teaching method may be effective if used properly (Koerin, 1980).

If the method of instruction is not the primary factor in the educational process, then what other variables are required to make community college teaching effective? Wilson et al. (1975) assert that faculty members reported to be the most effective by both students and colleagues are those most committed to undergraduate teaching. He also found that community college students require extrinsic motivation in the form of faculty enthusiasm and efforts to make courses relevant. The results of several studies give an indication of the characteristic behaviors that students consider important when evaluating teacher effectiveness. These attributes include knowledge of subject matter, planned and organized lectures, interest in teaching, and a willingness to help students (Mishra, 1980). A study by Mintzes (1980) reported high correlations were associated with the variables of clarity ($R = 0.65$) and rapport ($R = 0.64$). Instructor clarity is the ability to explain concepts or principles in a clear, straightforward way. Students place great value on instructors who give concrete examples of

abstract principles, give several examples of each concept, give a preliminary overview of the lecture at the beginning of class, and speak expressively or dramatically. Rapport is defined as the quality of relations between teacher and students. A teacher who addresses individual students by name, shows concern for the student's progress, shows a strong interest in subject matter and praises students for good ideas would be rated high in this category.

STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

The idea that effective community college teachers exhibit a high level of concern for their students is supported by a wide variety of research literature. A primary method used to determine the behavioral attributes of effective teaching is to follow the advice of Klemp, Huff, and Gentile (1980). They recommend that the best way to find out what is required for excellence in a role is to identify excellent performers and then find out what they do. The authors are careful to stress that excellent performers are not asked what they think is important, but rather how they behaved in various situations. The theory underlying this assumption is that excellent teachers are able to integrate knowledge and experience, and that their excellence can be measured by what they do rather than what they know or believe (Baker, Boggs, and Putnam, 1983).

The primary research method used to identify the attibutes of effective teachers is the intensive interview. In the early stages of a study, college administrators are asked to identify and recommend exemplary teachers from their

institutions, including full-time and part-time faculty. Based on student achievement criteria such as grade point averages, and the proportion of students who receive a passing grade, researchers are able to arrive at a sample of highly effective teachers. These criteria are reasonably efficient and cost-effective. After selecting teachers, the researchers invite them to participate in the study, guaranteeing them confidentiality and anonymity. This is the process used by Easton, Forrest, Goldman and Ludwig (1985) in their hallmark research study of effective community college teachers.

The purposes of this research study was to look for alterable teaching behaviors and techniques that could be presented to other faculty members who wished to improve their teaching. A second purpose of this study was to replicate an initial study of this topic at the Center for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning of the City Colleges of Chicago during the 1981-82 academic year (Guskey and Easton, 1983). The impetus for the present study (Easton et al. 1985) is that research on effective college teaching at the community college level is small compared to the needs and demands of this component of higher education. In addition, such innovations as television, computers, and other competency based instruction methodologies, have not proven to be the panacea to the difficulties of educating the diverse student population attending the nation's newest educational institution. The authors suggest that this lack of effectiveness is due because these innovations focus largely on "things" as enhancers of instruction and ignore the

human element. The missing part of the equation is the teacher behind the system. The teacher is the purveyor of instruction and facilitator of student learning and one must see if success in teaching is attributable to instructor behavior and attitudes as well as other methodologies (Easton et al. 1985).

In their initial study, Guskey and Easton, (1983), sought answers to two very specific questions. First, are there specific characteristics or behaviors that identify unusually effective community college teachers? Secondly, are there particular classroom practices that are common among teachers whose students learn very well and stay in school? The data for this study was based on a series of in-depth interviews with 30 community college faculty members identified as "exemplary" teachers, and selected from six Chicago community college campuses. All taught introductory level courses in one of four academic disciplines (biology, English, mathematics, and social sciences) and all had exceptionally high levels of student achievement and low rates of student attrition in these courses. The interviews were conducted by a team of trained interviewers and all sessions were recorded, transcribed, and summarized. The teachers were asked about their teaching style, how they organized courses, and their interactions with students.

The interview summaries revealed there were no common background characteristics or personal traits that distinguished these exemplary teachers from each other. Guskey and Easton (1983) identified four general areas regarding teaching practices and classroom activities that were all noticeably similar. These four areas were:

(1) These teachers were highly organized, they planned carefully, and had unambiguous objectives and high expectations for their students.

(2) All the teachers emphasized the importance of expressing positive regard for their students.

(3) All the teachers placed great emphasis on encouraging student participation.

(4) The teachers strongly emphasized the importance of providing students with regular feedback regarding their progress in the course.

Guskey and Easton (1983) were very optimistic concerning their results and were careful to note that these exemplary teacher characteristics were primarily specific teaching behaviors rather than personal characteristics. They concluded their initial project by noting that "these findings will likely be quite useful in efforts to help new or less experienced teachers improve the effectiveness of their teaching." In a later analysis of this study Easton, Barshis, & Ginsberg (1984) made these comments, "the results make it clear that what the individual teachers do in their classrooms does much to determine how well students perform, while the specific college, department, or course level has relatively less influence on student achievement."

Easton et al. (1985) replicated the 1983 study of Guskey and Easton to a remarkable extent. Not only does this study lend strong support to the generalizability of the earlier study, but it clearly showed that exceptional teachers had adapted extremely

well to the special conditions and circumstances of their community colleges and developed a set of teaching techniques uniquely suited to the needs of their students. The analysis of data from 60 additional exemplary teachers confirmed the four categories of teaching behaviors as identified by Guskey and Easton (1983). The four categories of teaching behavior exhibited by exemplary teachers are: plan and organize goals, show respect and interest in students, encourage student participation, and monitor student progress and respond accordingly. Once again the authors stress that these characteristics are behaviors and techniques rather than dispositions or personality traits. Each of these four characteristics will be listed and summarized separately. In addition, relevant research findings will also be introduced that lend support and credence to the work of these two researchers.

PLAN AND ORGANIZE GOALS

Easton and his associates found many common threads among these teachers that bound together a strong sense of their educational and instructional goals. These exemplary teachers conveyed a sense that they understand clearly the goals of their courses and know why they are important. These teachers share these goals with their students and inform them how they can attained. Ninety-three percent of the sample (N = 60) stressed the importance of acting on this factor. Porter and Brophy (1988) support this view that effective teachers are clear about their instructional goals. They caution teachers, however, about having too many goals that should be accomplished within the time

and energy available. There is a tendency over time to add more topics to a given course of instruction without deleting older material. When this occurs, more topics are taught for briefer periods of time. The result is that many topics are merely mentioned in a course with little hope for student mastery. The authors mention other factors which influence and determine effectiveness in attaining course goals. These include knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, students, and classroom management.

The teachers in this study know exactly what it is they want students to learn. The teachers relate course goals to the total curriculum, to job skills, and to everyday life, and then focus on the parts of the course that are necessary for the students' subsequent success in school or on the job. It should be kept in mind, however, that major course goals and objectives are predetermined and the teaching strategies and material are coordinated to match the basic goals. Effective teachers tell students what the course is about and clearly explain the requirements and procedures so "there's no surprise coming up anywhere along the line." A syllabus or course outline is distributed at the beginning of the course along with course objectives, assignments, grading criteria, textbooks, attendance policy, and classroom and laboratory rules. Teacher and student become partners in the learning experience. Effective teachers give tips to their students about what to study, how to study, where relevant resources are located, foretell key issues in lessons, and suggest methods and strategies to prepare for tests and quizzes. Organization is a critical factor in teaching well developed courses. Exemplary teachers communicate essential

points and assist students in the achievement of course goals.

SHOW RESPECT AND INTEREST IN STUDENTS

A highly important aspect of effective teaching distilled from this study relates to student-teacher relations. The underlying theory associated with this concept is the attempt on the teachers' part to help students find their own niche in the class, in the curriculum, and in the overall educational process. Teachers show their concern for students by the type of classroom environment they attempt to create, the interest they display about student concerns and problems, the expectations they place on students, and the manner in which they relate to students as individuals. Specific examples of showing interest in students is learning their names and additional information about their backgrounds and interests. Sixty-four percent of these excellent teachers said they make a concerted effort to learn students' preferred names by the first or second class meeting. Exemplary teachers attempt to develop a course view from the students' perspective and interest. Instruction can then be directed toward these interests and applied to everyday situations. It is the wise teacher who teaches to the interests of students and thereby creates a sense of course ownership with them.

McKeachie, Pintrich, Lin and Smith (1986) reinforce this concept by stating that "Teaching involves building links between the knowledge we are trying to teach and the knowledge and concepts our students already have. We cannot effectively bridge the gap between our knowledge and the students' minds without an understanding of what they believe and know. The tools we use to

make the bridge are metaphors, analogies, and examples that build on students' prior knowledge and experience so they can construct meaning out of the words and experiences we provide."

Although not expressly stated in this summary, there is an underlying inference that teachers will also take the time to understand the level of the student's pre-existing knowledge and adapt their instruction accordingly. Porter and Brophy (1988) suggest that students can arrive in a classroom setting with preconceived and erroneous ideas about the topic matter. Effective teachers confront student misconceptions directly and are able to contrast them sharply with the more precise and accurate conceptions being taught. The authors contend that students may not recognize the inaccuracy of their beliefs even after a course of instruction unless the teacher intervenes. Anderson and Smith (1987) refer to this as "conceptual change teaching." This concept is based on the premise that teaching does not involve infusing knowledge into a vacuum but instead involves inducing change in an existing body of knowledge and beliefs. The authors note that this method of teaching is especially applicable to instruction in science, although other disciplines could benefits from using this concept. It appears then that by taking the time to know and understand their students, effective teachers can develop a rapport that allows for such confrontations to take place.

Effective teachers create a classroom atmosphere that is not only conducive to learning but is conducive to better interpersonal relations between student and teacher. Many of the

effective teachers made concerted efforts to create a comfortable, cheerful, positive, friendly, and non-threatening atmosphere. Effective teachers refuse to embarrass or intimidate their students. Creating unnecessary and negative tension in a classroom only detracts from the learning of all students and promotes less involved students.

ENCOURAGE STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Effective teachers in the Easton et al. (1985) study found many ways of promoting active involvement in the learning process. The authors report that about ninety percent of the sample teachers emphasized the importance of engaging student attention and involvement in the classroom by asking questions, encouraging students to ask questions, arranging for students to work cooperatively with other students and promoting active learning with "hands on" applications and examples. The give and take of asking and answering questions helps draw students out and lets the teacher "make sure they are with me." Student and teacher questions help aid the instructional process by making sure facts and basic information are checked out. It also can spark discussion of new ideas that help students think, actively consider the concepts they are studying, and solve problems.

Guskey, Barshis, and Easton (1982) in an earlier analysis report that students who are more involved in instruction tend to be more academically successful than less involved students. The authors found a positive relationship between instructional involvement and achievement and aspirations. Effective teachers encourage their students to use instructional resources beyond

the classroom such as libraries, learning resource centers, tutors, counselors, informal peer study groups and other peer self-help groups. The by-product of such a process is to convey concern to students about them and their needs. Such concern helps develop rapport and lends itself to creating a learning environment where students feel involved and want to participate.

Effective teachers believe that active participation both inside and outside the classroom is important to students achieving their educational goals. These teachers are quite creative in designing exercises to involve their students in ways which are designed "to connect the abstract to the concrete and the theoretical to the practical." Such ways might include field trips, laboratory exercises, small groups discussions, and applying practical applications to problems of everyday living. Problems taken from newspapers, television, current movies, and students' own experiences, helps encourage participation and relates the course material in a manner that is personally meaningful. This is a technique effective teachers use to motivate students to become active participants in the learning process.

It is clear that effective teachers make a considerable effort to interact with their students, both inside and outside of the classroom, in ways that promote course involvement, interest, and genuine learning. The teacher characteristics previously identified are congruent with the research findings of Wilson et al. (1975), Mintzes (1980), Mishra (1980), and McKeachie et al. (1986). Though not mentioned specifically, it appears that effective teachers possess high expectations and

regards for their students and believe them to be capable of learning and growing in their educational pursuits. Effective teachers form a partnership with their students in meeting course goals and objectives and they assume a major responsibility for student outcomes. This view is also shared by Porter and Brophy (1988) who report that "teachers who accept responsibility for student outcomes are more effective than teachers who see their students as solely responsible for what they learn and how they behave." When the learning process breaks down, the authors suggest, both teacher and student should be involved in assessing the situation and taking corrective action.

The underlying theme that can be detected from the efforts of these effective teachers is that students become motivated to learn. The finding of Easton et al. (1985) present a rather clear picture that exemplary teachers actively seek ways to motivate their students by their attitude, expectations, regard, and by the assistance they provide. This perspective is congruent with the findings on motivation by Brophy (1987). The author states that "student motivation to learn is an acquired competence developed through general experience but stimulated most directly through modeling, communication of expectations, and direct instruction or socialization by significant others (especially parents and teachers)." He further suggests that teachers must not react to whatever motivational pattern students bring to a classroom setting but should become "active socialization agents" who should stimulate and activate the general development of student motivation to learn. Brophy

(1987) recommends a variety of preconditions upon which successful motivation is essential. Several worth noting which parallel the finding of Easton et al. (1985) are: supportive environment, meaningful learning objectives, appropriate level of challenge, adapt tasks to student interests, provide immediate feedback to student responses, provide opportunities to interact with peers, model interest in learning and motivation to learn, project intensity and enthusiasm, and make abstract content more personal, concrete, or familiar. The author concludes his finding by noting that motivation itself cannot be taught directly as a concept or a skill, but it can be developed by teachers using the strategies mentioned.

MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS AND RESPOND ACCORDINGLY

The fourth and final characteristic of effective teachers as reported by Easton et al. (1985) is concerned with assessing the achievement levels of their students and providing them with feedback and remediation recommendations. Involved teachers display concern for their students when they return papers in a timely manner and with written comments that are aimed at correcting errors and praising positive aspects. Frequently these teachers will meet with their students outside the classroom to discuss learning problems and to suggest recommendations to remediate deficiencies. In her study of teaching effectiveness and faculty development Koerin (1980) reports that out-of-class interaction is considered to be important by both students and colleagues. Faculty members who report the most out-of-class student contact are those who

philosophy is that education is a process of interaction not dependent solely upon a classroom setting.

Effective teachers also report monitoring the progress of the entire class so steps can be taken to adjust the pace of instruction. These monitoring efforts are both formal and informal. Formal methods of assessment might include quiz and test scores, projects, papers, presentations and reports. Informal methods of assessment might include class interactions, responses to questions, discussions with students and "the looks in their eyes." Over ninety percent of these teachers stress the importance of feedback so that "students know exactly where they stand." Specific remediation recommendations are frequently made. These could include referring to learning centers, tutors, counselors, and peers. These teachers also report discussing general study and learning techniques with the entire class to assist in improving overall study habits. Effective teachers are involved in constantly observing and assessing class performance and the progress of individual students. They take steps to praise or admonish when the situation demands it and are not reluctant to intervene or to change their instruction.

The technique of providing consistent and timely feedback is supported by a variety of researchers. Porter and Brophy (1988), in their study of effective teaching note that students are continuously monitored for their understanding and are routinely provided detailed feedback, but not necessarily in the same ways for all students. Brophy (1982) found that immediate feedback serves as a motivator for students, and Guskey, Barshis, and Easton (1982) believe that providing feedback/corrective systems

to students has proved successful in many teaching strategies. For example, in an experimental study at the Center for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning, the feedback/corrective process of allowing students to correct their quiz errors in group sessions, yielded approximately 15 percent higher mastery rates as compared to the control group. Letting students know where they stand relative to instructor expectations and course requirements is a behavior that effective teachers do very well.

KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER

Earlier parts of this paper have reported that effective community college teachers demonstrate the use of a wide variety of behaviors, or techniques, when interacting with their students. There is another variable in the equation of effective teaching, and it deals with the fundamental knowledge base that teachers possess and how they take advantage of instructional resources.

It is expected that college instructors are competent in their respective academic disciplines. However, this knowledge base must extend well beyond a scholarly expertise. There is a much greater expectation that is placed on the shoulders of all teachers, and it is this expertise, or lack of it, that appears to separate effective from non-effective teachers. McKeachie et al. (1986) sums up this issue by stating, "To know the subject matter for teaching is to know the organization of the subject matter in ways that enable the teacher to pull out concepts at different levels of organization for differing purposes - to know how to build conceptual structures from the simple to the

complex - to know how to derive specifics from generalizations and generalizations from specifics, in short, to be comfortable in simplifying while moving toward more complex, more problematic conceptual structures."

A significant knowledge base for teaching is only the beginning of the instructional process. Clearly, effective teachers know how to apply this knowledge base in ways that produce student learning. Porter and Brophy, (1988), and Anderson and Smith (1987) suggest effective teachers have a much better grasp of the concepts, skills, and applications their students are supposed to learn and that this ability is enriched by drawing on subject matter knowledge that goes beyond the immediate goals for student learning. Command of the subject matter influences teacher expectations for what students can and should learn as well as the effectiveness of the teachers' pedagogical strategies.

Koerin (1980) and Wilson et al. (1975) have suggested that knowledge and use of specific instructional methods does not guarantee learning - they are merely tools that aid in the teaching process. It is the teacher behind the system that matters. It is the wise teacher who takes the time to understand various teaching styles and methods and utilizes them in appropriate situations. Each teacher develops a method, or perhaps several, that influences how the subject matter knowledge base is used, how course content is developed, and how it is sequenced, paced, and presented. This is referred to as instructional style according to Lesser (1971), and how

curricular materials are handled is known to have different effects on student behaviors, including achievement (Taba, 1967). While the purpose of this paper is not to delve into this area of education, those persons interested in becoming effective teachers have a wide array of dichotomous instructional styles to choose from. Several examples given by Macneil (1980) include: teacher centered versus learner centered, authoritarian versus democratic, expository versus discovery, and directive versus nondirective. There is considerable controversy over the effects of instructional style and educational achievement with oftentimes confusing and contradictory data. Interested readers should read the study of Macneil (1980) to gain a more comprehensive understanding of this contentious issue. Never-the-less, there is much to be gained by gaining an intellectual and practical understanding of various instructional styles. Congruent with the mission of community college teachers, Witkin (1972) suggests "that optimal learning results when the instructional style of the teacher is designed to concentrate on the particular strengths of the learners cognitive style. This means that teachers develop an awareness of how their students receive, process, and remember information and plan their courses around these dynamics.

MASTERY LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING

A specific instructional method that came to prominence in the 1970'S is mastery learning. This is a teaching technique that is ideally suited to the needs of community college students. This method is discussed briefly in this paper because

it is advocated by John Q. Easton and Thomas R. Guskey, both of whom are major research contributors in this paper and in the area of community college teacher effectiveness. Guskey (1980) notes that mastery learning is based on the belief that all persons can learn. This is a method that is closely tied to instructional techniques which seek to put that belief into practice. Mastery learning allows for the individualizing of instruction for each student in group-based classrooms. The author notes that "In a more traditional setting, learning is a very compe' tive activity. With mastery learning, however, it becomes a cooperative rather than a competitive activity." One of the reasons this method has great appeal among teachers is grea: flexibility. Mastery learning does not require teachers to change their basic methods or style of instruction but are encouraged to use it in a manner best suited to their situation. Mastery learning blends well with other teaching methods and enhances the teachers ability to improve learning in the classroom (Guskey, 1980).

Data derived from research studies conducted at the City Colleges of Chicago and reported by Bonczar and Easton (1983) indicate positive results from teachers who used mastery learning. The conclusions from this data showed that mastery sections outperformed non-mastery sections, and full-time students who took two mastery classes performed much better than other students. The skills and work habits that students gained in mastery learning classes proved to be of benefit in other non-mastery classes. It also appears that teachers use mastery learning strategies, and with positive results, for more

difficult or troublesome classes (Bonczar and Easton, 1983).

Mastery learning involves the use of a teaching technique called the corrective/feedback process. Students take frequent "formative tests" to measure their learning progress. These are followed by corrective activities designed to remedy specific difficulties shown by the test. Evidently this is a technique that is widely used by effective teachers. Bonczar and Easton (1983) offer this insight about mastery learning: "In a study in which we interviewed very effective teachers at the City Colleges of Chicago (Guskey & Easton, 1983) we discovered that our outstanding teachers employ a variety of feedback and corrective techniques and processes in their teaching, regardless of whether they call themselves mastery learning teachers or not. Among the correctives that teachers use are computer aided instruction (PLATO), audio-visual materials, tutors, and individualized conferences with students."

Bonczar and Easton (1983) cite research on this topic which supports their contention that mastery learning is the most convenient and practical means of increasing the use of feedback and correctives in the average classroom. For a more in-depth understanding of mastery learning interested readers are invited to review the works of Caponigri, Matheis, & Schumann (1981) and Lysakowski & Walberg (1982).

SUMMARY

The research literature has been reviewed in an effort to identify the attributes of exemplary community college teachers. Based primarily on the research efforts of Guskey & Easton

(1983), Easton et al. (1985) and supported by a variety of other authors, a "core of behaviors or techniques" have been identified. Effective community college teachers distinguish themselves by displaying the following characteristics:

(1) In-depth knowledge of subject matter.

(2) Knowledge and use of various instructional methods and other educational resources.

(3) Interest in teaching.

(4) Very organized in planning course goals and lectures.

(5) Shows respect and interest in students.

(6) Actively encourage student participation.

(7) Monitor student progress and respond accordingly.

Very effective community college teachers exhibit a wide variety of attributes both inside and outside the classroom, in addition to those listed above. These teachers are obviously student-centered and accept responsibility for student outcomes. They communicate their expectations clearly and join with students as partners in the learning process. Their interest in students allows them to be sensitive to the needs of this population while motivating them to attain success. Effective teachers are able to make course content relevant by relating their experiences, giving examples, and connecting course goals to the real world expectations and experiences of their students.

There is nothing theoretical or oblique about these findings. They are the result of interviewing teachers who have been identified as being effective in the classroom. The characteristics of these men and women are behaviors and

techniques that can be taught, learned, and incorporated into the repertoire of any instructor who is so inclined. These attributes are not personality characteristics or traits, and there was no mention in any of the literature of persons "born to teach." Effective teachers want to teach and actively work at improving their vocation.

The solitary use of any one characteristic mentioned in this paper carries very little potential for raising the level of expertise of individual teachers. However, teachers who incorporate a variety of these techniques into their instructional style have the potential of significantly increasing the proportion of students reaching high learning standards. This is what Guskey, Barshis, & Easton (1982) refer to as a "multiplier effect." They note that to obtain such an effect requires relatively small changes in teaching methods, procedures, and costs little in teacher time and effort. Community college teachers who desire to improve student learning outcomes might well consider these recommendations.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The search for empirically based literature concerning effective community teachers reveals a paucity of material. While the general quality and methodology of this literature base is satisfactory, the dearth of material has necessitated that sources be obtained from outside the area of community colleges. This has not been entirely without merit because most of the research findings on effective teaching by Easton et al. (1985), Bonczar and Easton (1983), Guskey and Easton (1983), and Guskey

(1980) are supported by a variety of other authors, in one form or another. For example, the paper "Synthesis of Research on Good Teaching: Insights from the Work of the Institute for Research on Teaching" (Porter and Brophy, 1988) primarily concerns research conducted at the primary and secondary educational levels. The same can be said for the paper "Synthesis of Research on Strategies for Motivating Students to Learn" by Brophy (1987). Support from research studies at the college and university level can be found in the works of McKeachie et al. (1986), Koerin (1980) and Mintzes (1980) and others. Effective teachers exist at all levels of education. The presumption is that the "core of behaviors and techniques" that signify effective teaching for community college instructors is the same for other teachers, regardless of the educational delivery system.

The reason for mentioning this issue is to lament the obvious: community college teachers would rather teach that research or publish. Effective teachers expend considerable time and energy practicing their craft and this leaves precious little time for anything else. Rewards in a community college setting rightfully go to teachers who teach - not to teachers that publish. However, it is the perspective of this paper to encourage those scholarly activities and support the advice of Crocker-Lakness (1984). He believes that quality teaching depends on quality research, and that community college teachers should find the time to engage in research and publish. The motives of this assumption are fairly straightforward from this authors vantage point. Community college teachers who conduct

research can tell a story that needs to be told, and since they are intimately involved with their vocation, they are better able to tell this story. Until community college teachers become actively involved in providing valid evidence of this expertise, they will have to rely on other persons at different level of education to do it for them; this is probably no in their best interest!

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