

Practical Strategies for Flipping Your Class

Katherine M. Sauer
Metropolitan State University of Denver

What is a flipped classroom?

In a traditional classroom, the instructor lectures on the most important material.
Students apply the concepts outside of class.

In a flipped (inverted) classroom, students are predominantly exposed to the lecture material outside of class.
Students spend class time engaged in active learning.

Ask Yourself the Fundamental Question

In order to help my students learn,
what is the best use
of my face-to-face time with them?

Corollary: If my students actually read the text and came to class prepared, what would I choose to do with my class time?

Get Clear on Why You Want to Flip Your Class

A Few Possible Reasons

- administrative pressure
- increase student learning
- portfolio
- sounds interesting / ready to try something new

Deciding on a Course to Invert

Choose a course you know well.

- be familiar with the concepts that the students pick up easily and the concepts the students struggle with
- draw upon course resources that you've previously created

Start From the Learning Objectives

1. What are the course's current learning objectives?

Are they *measurable*?

Do they need to be revised/updated?

2. For each learning objective, specify appropriate intermediate learning objectives.

Examples from Principles of Microeconomics:

Course Learning Objective *Explain the features and implications of competitive and noncompetitive market structures.*

Intermediate Learning Objective (1 of several)

Graphically illustrate the profit-maximizing level of output and price for a firm in a monopoly market.

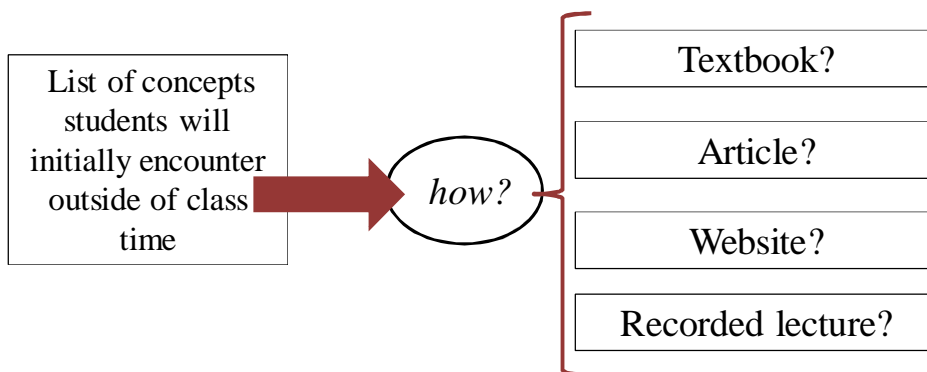
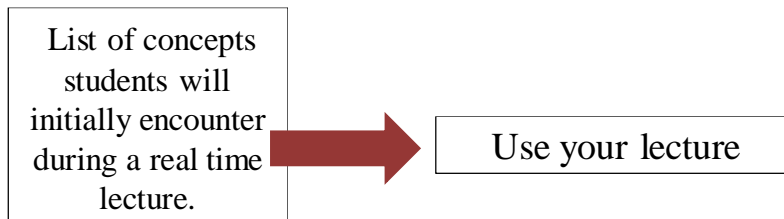
3. For each intermediate learning objective, list the necessary fundamental concepts.

Fundamental Concepts

- profit maximization rule (marginal revenue, marginal cost)
- graphs of cost curves (types of costs)
- price determination

4. For each fundamental concept, how necessary is it that you lecture on the concept *in real time*?

- Is the text clear and the concept readily understood from reading?
- Is it helpful that the students hear the concept explained by you, but not necessarily in real time?
- Is it a concept that really is best learned with you lecturing and allowing for student questions along the way?



Planning the Class Time

1. Check to see that students have come prepared.

- online questions prior to class
- “ticket” to participate
- brief quiz

Be sure to incentivize the preparation.

- give it some weight in the course grade

Allow for the concept of a “pass” (perhaps 2).

- can be used if not prepared
- can be used if not in class

2. Decide on an active learning technique for applying the concept and discovering more concepts

- case studies
- classroom experiments
- discussion
- cooperative learning
- context-rich problems
- clickers
- interactive lecture demonstrations
- Just-in-Time Teaching

Very helpful books

Helping Students Learn in a Learner-Centered Environment by Terry Doyle (Stylus Publishing)

Learner-Centered Teaching by Maryellen Weimer (Jossey-Bass)

Developing Learner-Centered Teaching by Phyllis Blumberg (Jossey-Bass)

Cautions

1. Flipping a course is time consuming.
2. When you examine your course learning objectives, you might find yourself re-thinking your whole course.
3. Students can be resistive to learner-centered courses.
4. Use technology judiciously.
5. Does your institution have different fees for “hybrid” classes?