

## Teaching Triangles Reflection- Liana Burghardt

I enjoyed the teaching triangles process. I found being in other types of classrooms very refreshing and thought provoking.

In general, I thought it was more useful for me to observe and to have to thoughtfully give feedback on other's teaching than to be observed. Perhaps this was because my reviews were quite positive and so while there were a few concrete suggestions the reviews did not point me toward a major aspect that I should really improve on. From watching others teach though, I noticed some of my own weakness. For instance, I am not the most skillful at asking questions that provoke thought rather than pat answers so I decided I need to spend more time coming up with questions beforehand. I also noticed that I am not as good on my feet as some others at seeing where the students want the conversation to go and letting it move organically in a way that still allows me to address the concepts that I want to get to. In sum, I think watching others really helped me think more critically about myself. Also it is remarkable how being watched can up your stress level so much even if you know it low stakes. I just tried to completely ignore the presence of the observers in the classroom, but it is hard.

Even though this is not part of the requirements for the Teaching Triangles, I also had my students give me feedback on each class that I taught and on the larger projects and writing assignments that I was in charge of. While this is really hard to screw up the courage to do, I think it really helped to continually receive that sort of feedback. You were also right that students were really impressed that I was soliciting that sort of feedback from them and it improved buy in. I also got better over the term at how I asked them for their feedback. The phrasing of questions is more important than I ever imagined for getting useful answers (I am sure any social scientist would already know this by now)!

I found the subsequent conversations after the evaluations fun, but I found it hard to bring up constructive topics for discussion. I wonder if there is a way to make a little cheat sheet for this conversation with prompts to help keep the conversation on track. It is so easy to veer off into more comfortable territory like your research and spend the whole time there. I also thought this was a good opportunity to talk more generally about teaching styles, philosophies, and strategies in a way that can't happen on the evaluation forms.

Thanks for facilitating!