Record of Observation or Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed:
Size of student group:
Observer: **Zans Gurskis**
Observee: **Darren** Doherty

Note: This record is solely for exchanging developmental feedback between colleagues. Its reflective aspect informs PgCert and Fellowship assessment, but it is not an official evaluation of teaching and is not intended for other internal or legal applications such as probation or disciplinary action.

Part One
Observee to complete in brief and send to observer prior to the observation or review:

What is the context of this session/artefact within the curriculum?

Exploratory Practice – Research for Personal Projects focusing on Character Development/Genre

How long have you been working with this group and in what capacity?

5 months as Group Leader

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

To set up development work for their next project through research

What are the anticipated outputs (anything students will make/do)?

That they present their research to the group (PDFs or Power Points)

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

Making sure everyone contributes!

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

Zhan will be introduced to the group at the start of the session which will be in person in rooms 302/302a

What would you particularly like feedback on?

Anything of note really – especially how I handle Students who may not want to contribute

How will feedback be exchanged?

Via email

Observer to note down observations, suggestions and questions:

Zhan's feedback:

I was invited to join Darren's class; he had roughly 30 BA Y2 Animation students, the session was focused on presenting their motivation and inspiration for the next project. Each student had roughly 5-10 minutes to talk about animation that they find inspiring, and what they would like to learn and explore in their future projects.

The mood of the session was very friendly and relaxed, yet everyone was listening to each other and asking questions about their motivation and future projects.

In-between each presentation, we applauded the student for coming up to present and also applauded them after the mini presentation, which felt very human and it felt like the group was very united, and friendly towards each other.

Darren seems very understanding, taking time with his students - very personable. But he also knows when and how to address a student that is being a little loud/ talkative. His method- was to ask a student if they wanted to share something with the class and talk less – as it is difficult for anyone to focus on the presentation while others are talking.

In terms of the mini presentation, he let students ask questions first, following by a few more formal questions, to see where they are with their projects, but it came in a very comfortable and curious way.

One other thing that he has done - he had a quick presentation about himself in a similar manner, I think the purpose was to show students the parallels and get on the same level as them. Which is always commendable.

Some students chose not to present in front of others- in that case – Darren gave them a opportunity to present later- one-on-one. Which I think was the most comfortable option for them.

I think overall, Darren is focused on students morale, and he wants to encourage everyone by-in-a-way - being one of them, and providing a comfortable space for them to learn and grow together.

Observe to reflect on the observer's comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged:

I feel Zhan's feedback reflects good and enlightening observations of me that have made me consider and reflect upon my approach to working with students. I feel he's right in that I very much like the students to feel that this is going to be an exchange, and not necessarily me preaching to them. I've been part of the Film & Television/Animation Industry for close to 30 years, and while I know I can draw on this experience from my practice to inform my teaching, I also know that the students will be watching different work to what I'm looking at, so I'm also very interested in what they're viewing now, what they're interested in and how this will influence the work they'd like to make.

In this session, the students presented research PDFs and PowerPoints about what was inspiring them, this forming a basis for the research and development that would feed into their next animation project. I also made a short presentation of things that had been inspiring me too, including recent gallery and trip experiences. This was to show them that what they're learning now in terms of research isn't just for their time at LCC, it's a lift time practice that will enrich their work.

There's a particularly interesting observation Zhan made that I want to encourage the students by in a way, being one of them. I would agree with this as I do like to create that kind of atmosphere where the students can ask questions and contribute at any point of the session. There are times when you find that you may have to set some boundaries, such as when a student was whispering throughout a fellow student's presentation but quite loudly. I asked the student if they wanted to go next, and when they declined, I asked them to understand that their colleague is trying to present, so this was a way of putting them in their colleague's shoes so to speak and appealing to their sense of empathy. Luckily having to do this is quite rare as it's a very good group. For those who didn't want to present in front of the group, I made sure there was time to talk one to one afterwards.

Of course, depending on the session and what you teach, the approach can vary. But I would say no matter what I'm teaching, whether it's Exploratory Practice, Creative Writing or Professional Futures Units, I try to keep the same approach was I like the students to contribute and be proactive feeling that the lesson is an exchange, a collaboration even. I've always told students that today I'm their Lecturer, but in the future, we could be colleagues and collaborators.