

Transcript for Module 1

Barbi: Hi, everyone. This is Barbi. I'm excited to go ahead and jump into module one, so let's go ahead and get started. I want to start with a case study, it's actually a mini case study, to share with you some of the experiences that I've had as I've traveled around the country talking with faculty. One time, I was leading a workshop at a campus and as I was setting up all of my papers at the beginning of the workshop and sort of arranging the room, one of the faculty members walked in and she said, "Barbi, you're going to be so proud of me. I already flipped my class last semester." She was really excited and I was like, "Okay. Tell me about it." She said, "I recorded three lectures a week, every single week, for all 16 weeks. Put them online for my students to watch." I said, "Okay. How did that go?" You can probably imagine the conversation went something like this. "I'm exhausted. My TA's exhausted. My students didn't watch the videos. I'm not so sure I would do it again." Then it sort of spiraled from there.

What started as this definition for her of this flipped classroom, became something that was almost impossible to sustain and really drained her energy and she sort of lost focus about what the flip was really all about. Whether or not you're defining the flipped classroom this way. Whether you've already tried this and it didn't work and now you're looking for a new solution because you know the benefits of the flipped classroom model and active student centered learning. That's what I'm hoping this course will do for you. It's really to help you start thinking about how you can engage your students, but do it in a way that's sustainable and doesn't tax you completely, and also is beneficial for your students.

Here in module one, thinking about and recalling what happened with that mini case study and maybe what your experiences have been, or perhaps even you haven't even started yet and you're still thinking about, how do I do this? I'm interested, but I'm not sure where to start. That's what we're hoping to do with this course.

The first two questions we're going to tackle is, what exactly is the flip? It's really important for you to define what the flip means to you and your students and it might look different from one of your colleagues classes that are flipped. That's okay. Then, how do you decide what to flip, because clearly flipping everything is not the answer that you're looking for. It's a great way to set yourself up for complete burn out, like that faculty member in our case study.

Before we get started, let's take a moment and look at our learning outcomes for this particular module. First, we're going to examine some of the definitions of the flip. I think it's important for you to take a look at what's been done, what's been said, and how people are misinterpreting some of the definitions of the flip, which is causing quite a bit of controversy. People are either really, really passionate about it or they're like, "This is just another fad." I want you to consider why it's important to define the flip for you and your students. Finally, I want you to start thinking about how you can organize and plan a manageable, successful, don't burn yourself out flipped learning experience for your students.

First things first. What is the flip and why does that even matter? Some of the common misconceptions that I have heard and seen in the flipped classroom conversation is, "Oh, this is just a way to replace lectures with videos" or "We should eliminate the lecture completely and that's what the flipped classroom enables us to do." One I hear very often, more from people who are in charge of budgets and course scheduling, is that we can off load the content and free up more teacher's time, more faculty member's time to work with the students in class, or to conduct research, or look for grants. I've also heard, "You move all the lectures online, so we can do all the active learning in class." One I've even read before was just replacing teachers with videos.

I'm hoping many of you out there are laughing or nodding or shaking your head because these are not the definitions of the flipped classroom that we want to embrace. These have spun out of misconceptions of what the definition truly is and what it could be, because ultimately your role in the flipped classroom as the teacher, the instructor, the professor, the faculty member, is even more important in a flipped classroom. You cannot be replaced with videos.

Let's take a look at some of the definitions. I think it's important that we start here, because I want you to see where the conversation has been and where it's going, so that you can position yourself, and your students, and your classroom within this conversation in a way that works best for you.

In 2000, three authors in economics actually came up with the term inverting the classroom, where they described that the events that take place in class, now go outside of class and vice-versa. They called it inverted. At that time, they were using learning technology such as VCR's, the World Wide Web, and maybe some tapes. We just didn't have access to as many of the technologies that we do today, but they could see the potential for the model to engage students in the classroom and outside of the classroom. What's interesting here is what's evolved over the last 16 years, is we've changed from inverted classroom to flipped classroom. We've just changed the terminology, but the foundations are the same.

Another definition that many people reference comes from EDUCAUSE and that is the flipped classroom is a model in which the lecture and homework elements are reversed. This might be where some of the misconceptions are taking place, because they describe it as short video lectures are viewed by the students at home before class and then in class they come and they do the active learning. People began to really question this because, why do you always have to have a video of a lecture? What does it mean by short? Aren't there other ways that students can engage in content before coming to class, so they can be prepared? Sure. They can read, they can listen to podcasts, they can do homework assignments that include worksheets. There's so many things that they can do, so why were we restricting the definition to video lectures? What we do like about this definition and many people have commented, is that the whole idea of taking in class time to really spend it devoting ourselves to exercises, projects, discussion, active student learning.

Let's look at another definition. Bergmann and Sams are actually high school teachers. They've been coined with coming up with the model flipped learning, flipped classroom. I'm not sure that that's completely accurate, but it's sort of a crazy convoluted story to figure out where the term flipped came from. But, I do see this mentioned and them credited with it quite frequently. Ultimately, what I want to talk about here is their definition of the flip looks a little different than the first two we've seen. For them, it's about flipping the attention away from the teacher and towards the learner, and eliminating large group direct instruction so that you can meet the individual learning needs of each student. Part of this definition works for many scholars, part of this definition works really well for teachers in the k-12 setting or in smaller classrooms, it doesn't always work when we're talking about large classes, 80, 100, 200, 400 students.

Let's look at this definition a little more closely. Here, it's the idea of flipping the attention away from the teacher and towards the learner and that's more like a philosophy. Where we start to question it is, why do we have to eliminate the large group direct instruction? In some cases you can, but I don't know that you always need to take the lecture out of the classroom. Sometimes it's completely appropriate and the lecture is the right instructional model to use. Some scholars have pinpointed this part of the definition as being one that's a little bit questionable. I do think we could eliminate large group direct instruction in some cases, maybe smaller classes. Maybe some k-12 settings, but the idea of eliminating it completely, especially in adult learning or larger classes and college, this might be problematic.

For me, I've designed the flip around sort of my teaching philosophy and my work with faculty development over the last 16 years. For me it's an acronym. I created this in 2011 before I even knew or heard the term flipped classroom. For me it means to focus on your learners by involving them in the process. Whatever process it is you want students to be engaged in, you're involving them in that during class time. If we take that definition and we layer it up against Bloom's taxonomy, you'll see that typically with the lecture, in class time is really focused on the remembering, understanding, and students might do a little bit of applying if you integrate some things into your lecture that allow them to do that. Then we send them outside of class to do the heavy lifting. That's when they analyze and evaluate, create, write papers, construct knowledge and that's where we find that students need the most help.

With the flip, you reverse or flip that, you are trying here to move the lower level learning outcomes outside of your class, so that you can then have the opportunity in class where your students are doing that heavy lifting in class, with you and their peers. When they're doing homework assignments, when they're writing the paper, they're putting together a research project, whatever that may be, there's time in class that permits them to do that so that they're not out there on their own, and it also allows them to have more opportunities for sharing, critical thinking and creating and constructing new knowledge potentially.

Recently in 2014, I saw the Flipped Learning Network, which is a new body of knowledge that's being created and a new organization out there that's really driving some of this. They've created the term flipped learning as opposed to flipped classroom. This is sort

of where the conversation is going. For them, this is a big definition, so I'll read it and we'll break it up in pieces. "It's an approach in which direct instruction moves from the group space into the individual space, and then the resulting group space is transformed into this dynamic interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively with the subject matter." That is quite a mouthful.

Let's break it down a little bit. The idea again of direct instruction, a lecture, moving from the group space to the individual space, and again, I can see how that can be misinterpreted as move your lectures online. Not necessarily. There's still a place for lectures in the flipped classroom. They just might not be 50 minute lectures. I really like this part of the definition where it talks about transforming this group space into a dynamic interactive environment so students aren't just sitting and consuming and listening to information, they're actually engaging with it and constructing knowledge and sharing ideas. This is important, your role switching from, and I'm sure you've heard the term, the sage on the stage, to the guide on the side, so I like this definition. It calls attention to your role in the flipped classroom and the fact that this does take a creative effort. It does take a lot of creativity to pull together active learning experiences and to make sure that students are being engaged and actually understand what they're supposed to do and know by the end of class. I want to bring this definition to the forefront. I don't see this one-sided quite as much because it is so new. I think there's a lot that we can do with this.

You're probably saying, "I get it." I hope you are at least trying to figure out where you fit within some of the literature and some of the thinking about the classroom. Now, ultimately it's "how do I do it?" and that's what the rest of the course is all about, but I wanted to make sure you had those foundations so you know sort of where it's coming from, and you can make sure that you are where you want to be with your flipped classroom model.

Let's talk about how do you do it. I want to start by saying that I think you should always think about one particular lesson. If you've flipped a class before and it didn't go well we can unpack that a little bit and see why it might not have worked. If you're not sure and you've never done it before and you're kind of thinking about it, flipping one lesson is a great place to start. I recommend that we start by looking for something called flippable moments. This is a great place to start when you're thinking about, "Okay, what should I flip? What should I do? How should it work?" Flippable moments allow you to zero in and focus on exactly what needs to be flipped. The first place to look for a flippable moment is to look for confusion. Clearly, maybe your students failed a test, maybe there's a trend that you see where students are really struggling with the content. Maybe previous class semesters have really struggled with a particular topic or chapter. That's a great place to put some energy into the flip. Look for confusion.

The second place is to look for the fundamentals and what I mean here is look for the places where your students need the information before they can move on. If they absolutely positively must know this, before they can move onto chapter two, unit two or even to the next course, the 102 course, that's important to flip as well because then

your allowing them to experiment and play with the information and the topic in lots of different ways and they can make sure they know it and you can make sure they know it before they move on.

Finally, look for boredom. Are your students bored? Have they checked out? Are they checking their phones? Are they totally distracted? Are they not coming to class? That might be a cue to flip it. I also say that if you're bored, maybe you've taught the same class for the last 15 years, maybe you've taught the same course for the last 12 semesters, maybe your tired of teaching the 101 course and you just need to put some new energy into it. If you're bored that energy carries over into your students and how they feel about the course as well. If you're not excited and enthusiastic, they're not going to be either. If you're bored that's a great place to flip as well.

I want to highlight the rookie mistake as we start to bring this module one to a close and that is trying to flip everything. Recall the opening case study. That faculty member interpreted the flipped model as offloading content, recording full lectures, and then doing that for the entire semester or the entire year. It was too much and it led to burnout, her students didn't watch the videos, they couldn't see the value of watching the lectures and then coming to class. It just didn't work. Try not to flip everything. It leads to burnouts and it's extremely overwhelming, not only for you but imagine if your students have to watch an hour lecture for five classes that they're taking every single week. Clearly, they will also become burned out.

There's simply not enough time. It takes time to plan really good active learning, flipped learning experiences and there's just not enough time and there's also not enough class time. Some of you might be teaching a 50 minute class, or an hour and a half class. Some of you may teach a longer, like three hour chunk of time, but still no matter what, it seems like we always run out of time in class, especially when we introduce an active learning or flipped learning experience. We want to make sure that when we use those moments that we flip, we want to make sure they're valuable, which leads me to the last one.

If you overdo it, if you're doing it all the time, if you're doing the same strategies all the time, you lose what I call the "magic" of the flip. The flip or active learning or student centered learning, when it works, it is almost magical. The students get it, class time flies by, you're right there in there with the students and it's probably why you do what you do. It's for those moments and that's sort of the magic of the classroom. We don't want to overdo that. Just like you can overdo a lecture, you can overdo active learning. You can overdo flipping your classroom. We want to pick and choose carefully and not flip everything.

My pro tip for you as a reminder is I want you to think about flipping one moment in one lesson. You might want to start with something I call "low stakes" activities. Low stakes activities don't take a lot of time to prepare. They don't take a lot of time do in class, and also if you're a little nervous about letting go in the classroom and not really being in control every second of what you're going to say and what your students are going to say, these are good activities to sort of get you started and see how it feels.

I would recommend that you look for flippable moments. Make sure you're paying attention to where are students confused, where are the fundamentals, and where are they potentially bored. You might also try reviewing prior semester's grades looking for trends. That might help you figure out what to flip. Then think about your own experiences with whatever you teach and there is something out there called the curse of knowledge, which we're going to come back to in a later module, but the idea of the curse of knowledge is that you know this material so well. You're a teacher and a scholar of this material. You have forgotten what it's like to not know it anymore. In fact it's impossible for you to not know it anymore. It's hard for you to go back and remember what it's like to be a rookie or a beginner or a newbie when it comes to whatever discipline that you're in.

Something that may look very easy for you may be very difficult for your students. That's called the curse of knowledge. You have this so much knowledge that it's hard for you to think back to what it's like to not know it. I have an exercise for you in module two that's going to help with this, but I wanted to bring your attention to it as your thinking about what to flip, look at your own experiences, but then also think about how those experiences could be easy for you but hard for your students.

I will leave you with this. Just as you are learning how to teach this way, your students are learning how to learn this way. We have to, on this journey, support our students as they move from being, I'm students who are used to sitting in a classroom memorizing information and spitting it out on a test, to students who come in and see the value of the struggle of the learning process and understand why that's important for them to go through that. Just want to leave you with that quote to help you position yourself into the minds of your students and their experiences. We're going to circle back to this as well, because there's a lot that we can learn from how students learn and that will help us figure out how to design our flipped classrooms in a way that helps them move through this journey as well.

I'm going to leave you with flipped strategies at the end of every module, just so you have some solid takeaways and you can find the resources for these in your packet, which you can download as part of this course, so you can see sort of how to do it and how to adapt it, including some bonus strategies as well.

What I mentioned about low stakes flipped strategies, things that take little time to set up and they're not big and scary, so you still maintain control of your classroom. Number one is Write Pair Share. Some of you may have heard of Think, Pair, Share, where you ask students a question, you have them think about it, turn to a partner, talk about it, then you open it up across the whole class. Same thing here, except you have students writing first. Perhaps you ask them a question or give them a quote and you have them write their reactions to it, then they can exchange with a partner, discuss each other's opinions and ideas and then share with the whole class. This strategy doesn't have any setup time as long as you prepare in advance for what your writing prompt is going to be and then it will probably take two or three minutes in class. It's a great way to break up a lecture.

Number two could be blank slides. If you're using a slide deck very much like what I have here, leave a slide blank, put a question on it or leave the bullet points blank, and allow the students time to figure out what should go on that slide, or allow them time to fill it in as they go as you're continuing your lecture or as an activity is taking place. Blank slides can create curiosity because we always think there should be something on the slide when we're looking at it.

Finally, similar to that is guided notes. You can have your students give them a worksheet or they can print it out before they come to class and really all you've done is provide an outline that has empty space there, and you've given them the outline of your class topic, of your lesson, of your lecture, of your video, whatever that may be and you have students fill it in as they go.

Any of these could be used during class and they don't take a lot of time. A little bit of prep time, but it's not too bad. If you're really worried about, "Oh, I just don't have time. I have so much content to cover." These three strategies allow students to engage with the material in a different way and encourage you to sort of stop and think about what are students doing during a lecture or during a class or during a video or listening to a podcast. Here are three examples of what they could be doing.

All right. I'm going to end with your homework. I would like you to try to think for yourself, what does the flip mean to you? How are you going to define it in your class? How does it relate to your discipline? How does it relate to your teaching philosophy? What does it mean to you? It may or may not look like what I've provided through the definitions in the beginning, but really think about what it means to you and your students.

Number two is: I want you to think about a course and think about a flippable moment in one of those courses. Do you see confusion? Is there a place where students are bored? A place where you're bored? Perhaps a place where you need to reconnect students to the fundamentals. I want you to locate one of those in your courses, because you're going to use that in module two, and that's what's coming up next.

In module two, we're going to actually look at what goes in and out of your flipped classroom. What content can you move out of the classroom to help students sort of build that fundamental basic knowledge and then we're going to talk about what goes in the classroom so that you can use that class time wisely and move students up to higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy. We're also going to clarify the purpose and goal of your flipped lesson. That's a great place to start. When you've already identified the flippable moment, that will really help you refine what it is you're trying to do with your flipped lesson. Finally, of course I'm going to share more ideas for flipped and active learning strategies. I'm looking forward to continuing this in module two.