



COURSE SYLLABUS

TRACK 3

Pedagogy & Assessment

COURSE 3

Feedback Loops

NEUROTEACH GLOBAL COURSE SYLLABUS:

Track 3 Course 3: *Feedback Loops*

Title

Feedback Loops

Audience

This course is intended for all pre-service and in-service teachers. It is also designed for administrators and those in teacher support roles. It is intended for all educators who want to learn how to use the latest research from the science of teaching and learning to improve their daily work with every child. This course provides teachers with knowledge of research backed strategies to improve student achievement, well-being and the whole-school experience, and the skills to translate them into everyday practices in their class or school.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Need for the course

In the last 20 years of research, the factor with the greatest impact on student achievement is teacher efficacy.¹ To increase achievement, well-being, attitudes to learning, self-efficacy, mindset, motivation, and academic tenacity, every student from PreK to 12th grade needs a teacher who has knowledge of the latest research on how to make all this happen, and who has the skills to translate this knowledge into daily practices in their class and school.

But a gap exists between research backed strategies that boost student outcomes and everyday practices in real classrooms – and this gap is wide, long-standing, and hard to cross. Teachers need a means to evolve credibly as we learn more about how learning occurs. And they need it in a format that is engaging, is designed to lead to practical change, and fits the time demands of their schedule. Teachers need professional development designed using the science of learning to teach them about the science of learning.

¹ Hattie, J. (2003). Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence? Paper presented at the ACER Research Conference, Melbourne, Australia.

Course Description

By "feedback loops," we mean the feedback that teachers give to students to help them take the next step in their learning, as well as the feedback that teachers get *from* students about their learning in the form of formative assessment.

In general, teachers should be doing less of the former and more of the latter. Teachers often feel obligated to provide lots of feedback, but studies show that the *quality* of the feedback given has a much higher impact on learning than the *quantity*. In fact, mediocre feedback can

actually lead to worse learning outcomes than if students received no feedback at all. Fortunately, research suggests guidelines for what high-quality feedback looks like.

In addition, teachers often neglect to get feedback in the form of formative assessment, despite the fact that learning is often improved when teachers and students do formative assessment on a daily basis. Using your intuition alone to figure out what your students currently know and can do is not as effective as using short low-stakes and no-stakes assessments designed to give you insights into their current level of performance.

The principal goal of this course is to help teachers find out what their students know and provide Feedback to get them to the next level.

Concept #1	Less is more (when giving feedback on learning)
Concept #2	More is more (when getting feedback on learning)
Concept #3	Feedback should be more work for the student
Concept #4	(Almost) anything can be formative assessment
Concept #5	Students want feedback

Learning Objectives

- Be able to articulate the difference between formative and summative assessment. **This matters because** both are important but at different times in the learning process.
- Be able to create a formative assessment, and know that you should use formative assessment as a regular part of every class. Know that it should lead to you changing your instruction and to changes in what each student does next. **This matters because** regular feedback on what students currently do and do not know helps teachers spot and fix gaps.
- Know that you should not give grades and feedback at the same time – they come at different points in a learning episode. Be able to design opportunities for students to act on feedback soon after getting it, and know that you should give this class time. **This matters because** feedback works best when students get a chance to use it.
- Know that receiving feedback is often an emotional activity, and that you should pay attention to the emotional component of feedback. Know that how each student receives the feedback determines whether they will do anything with it. **This matters because** feedback only improves learning if students do something with it.
- Know that the feedback you give at the end of the year (delayed, reduced, summarize) should be different than at the start (early: rapid, detailed, specific) Know that you should design scaffolding that weans students off highly structured feedback over the course of the year. **This matters because** students can become overdependent on your feedback.

Instructor: Dr. Ian Kelleher

Credits: 2.5 credit hours (see detailed breakdown in later section)

Description of the Experience

“The science of learning” is a name for all the research from many fields that suggests ways to improve learning and boost each child’s whole-school experience. Neuroteach Global is an online experience that helps teachers and school leaders learn strategies based on the science of learning and apply them in their own classroom or school. It does it in a way that is itself based on the science of learning: intentionally spaced micro-learning (approximately 10 minutes at a time over a period of roughly four weeks, that teachers can do on the electronic device of their choice). You cannot binge the lessons as research suggests this leads to less retention.

Neuroteach Global is split into 12 courses, each of which takes a total of approximately 2.5 hours to complete. Each course is in the form of an engaging story set in a fictional school. Questions are embedded in the story, serving as both a teaching tool and as a formative assessment. Each course contains two videos and an embedded field guide. In addition, each course also contains two real-world challenges which require you to apply what you have learned in your own course, classroom or school, and then upload an artifact. You will then receive feedback within 72 hours from a real teacher, trained by the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning, who will either ‘pass’ you based on a rubric provided by us, or who will give you feedback to reattempt the task.

Before taking the course

Before starting this course, participants take our Neuroeducational Confidence Diagnostic (NECD), which gives us a baseline measure of their knowledge and confidence of research-informed teaching strategies.

During the course

This course includes a variety of activities designed to (1) boost engagement with the material and course; (2) deepen knowledge of research-informed teaching and learning strategies that can help all students; and (3) build skill and confidence in applying these strategies in your everyday practice. It contains:

- **8 chapters of content knowledge.** Each chapter is in the form of a story set in our fictional school, but embedded in each chapter are a set of questions that test teachers’ knowledge of what it means to apply the research into the classroom. Teachers can get the information to answer the questions from the story itself, the embedded ‘Field Guide’, the extra readings given in the field guide, or their background knowledge. If a teacher gets an answer wrong, they receive teaching feedback that will help them get the right answer. Each chapter takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

- **2 videos.** These are 4-5 minutes long and provide direct instruction on major principles. Following each video, teachers are required to respond to a reflection prompt.
- **2 real-world missions.** Each of these is a task that requires you to apply the course material to your own classroom, course or school. Each mission requires teachers to submit an artefact, which could be a written description or reflection, or a photo of something they have created. Teachers upload these artefacts to Neuroteach Global, where they are assessed by teachers trained by us in the science of learning. Feedback is given within 72 hours, written by real humans. If criteria are not met, teachers are required to redo their real-world mission and resubmit.
- **1 field guide.** The field guide contains key background knowledge, addresses relevant neuromyths, and gives five concepts and five implementable strategies. One suggested use of the field guide is to print it out, highlight sections you want to implement, discuss with peer teachers, and come up with a plan to put it into your class. The field guide also includes a curated list of articles, papers and books, organized by level of complexity, to help participants expand their science of learning journey if they so choose.

After taking the course

After taking all the Neuroteach Global courses they signed up for, teachers take a post-course version of the NECD. This contains the same measures of knowledge and confidence of research informed practices as the pre-course version, plus additional measures that examine if and how Neuroteach Global has changed a teacher's practice.

Calculation of Credit Hours

Neuroteach Global consists of 12 courses. This course, *Feedback Loops*, is one of these twelve courses. Each of the twelve courses totals 2.5 credit hours. They all follow the same work pattern, as described underneath.

The *Feedback Loops* course contains:

- 8 chapters of content with embedded questions: 8 x 10 minutes = **80 minutes**
 - 2 chapters of videos plus response: 2 x 7.5 minutes = **15 minutes**
 - 2 real world challenges where you are given a task that requires you to apply the course material to your own classroom, course or school. You upload your response, then receive feedback within 72 hours from a real person: 2 x 20 minutes = **40 minutes**
 - 1 Field guide to read, embedded into the online course: **15 minutes**
 - The field guide also contains a list of additional background readings, but these are not included in our time calculation.
- Total = 150 minutes (2.5 hours)**

The twelve total courses in Neuroteach Global are organized into four themed ‘tracks’ which contain three courses each. Each course totals 2.5 credit hours, so the total for each of the four tracks is $3 \times 2.5 = 7.5$ credit hours. So doing all 12 courses/4 tracks in Neuroteach Global would give a teacher $4 \times 7.5 = 30$ credit hours.

This course, *Feedback Loops*, fits into the entire scheme as shown in the table below (outlined in bold):

Track 1: Learning Environments, 7.5 hrs	Track 2: Curriculum Design, 7.5 hrs	Track 3: Pedagogy & Assessment, 7.5 hrs	Track 4: Student Success & Well-Being, 7.5 hrs
Teacher as Brain Changers, 2.5 hrs	Planning for Forgetting, 2.5 hrs	Learning Made Memorable, 2.5 hrs	The Science of Study, 2.5 hrs
Classroom Design, 2.5 hrs	Practice Made Perfect, 2.5 hrs	The Engaged Brain, 2.5 hrs	Thinking Outside the Brain, 2.5 hrs
Classroom Culture, 2.5 hrs	Building for Every Brain, 2.5 hrs	Feedback Loops, 2.5 hrs	The Brain at 100%, 2.5 hrs

Materials Required

- A phone or computer with a web browser. (It does not matter if it is iOS, Android, Windows, Apple, Chromebook, etc – it just needs a device with a web browser)
- Internet service provider
- Email

Evaluation

Before starting, participants take our Neuroeducational Confidence Diagnostic (NECD). This online tool gives us a baseline measure of participants knowledge and confidence of research-informed teaching strategies. It also provides a measure of self-efficacy – the belief that as an educator I have the skills, knowledge and ability to help all my students. Research tells us that teacher self efficacy can have a significant impact on student achievement.

After taking however many tracks of Neuroteach Global they signed up to take, participants take a second post-course version of the NECD diagnostic. This includes the same questions as in the pre-course diagnostic, so we can get a measure of the progress participants have made in their knowledge of research-informed teaching and learning strategies and their confidence in applying them in their own everyday practice. We also measure if a teacher’s self-efficacy has improved. The post-course diagnostic also contains additional measures that examine if and how Neuroteach Global has changed a teacher’s practice.

In addition, participants have to complete two real-world challenges. Each real-world challenge demands that participants apply what they have been learning about in their own class or school. Each challenge requires participants to create an artefact (usually a document or/and image) which they upload to Neuroteach Global. These are assessed by teachers trained by us using a rubric we have created. If participants do not meet the requirements of the real-world challenge they are asked to resubmit. Participants are not deemed to have completed a course of Neuroteach Global until they have successfully completed all the real-world challenges.

This course contains many questions for participants to answer. Participants' responses are recorded, automatically analyzed, and compiled into a learning report which they receive. In the cases when a school signs up a group of teachers to take Neuroteach Global, the school appoints a point-person who will receive a report from us that show's each learner's percentage completion score, whether they have completed the real-world missions, and data on how well they answered the questions. This point person can also get average data for the group. In addition, our customer success representative can answer questions and field information requests that arise during the course of a teacher or school's work with Neuroteach Global.

After taking this course, participants will receive two numerical marks. The first is a "Percent Complete" mark. To get 100%, all components of the course must be finished, including real word missions that have been accepted by graders. The second is a "score" that is calculated based on a combination of components completed and whether you got questions correct on the first, second, third, fourth, or subsequent attempts. On satisfactory completion this course, participants will receive a certificate from The Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning and a link to download a pdf copy of this course description guide.

For More Information

Visit our website: <http://neuroteach.us>

Contact Us

The Neuroteach Global team can be reached via email at neuroteach@thecttl.org
Neuroteach Global is an online professional development solution from The Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL). For more information, visit <http://thecttl.org>

Neuroteach Global has been accredited as a professional development program for educators by the state of Maryland.



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AT ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL