

Session 9 Teacher Deep Dive

Learning and Growth Assessment

Before your final session, it would be valuable to take some time and deeply assess yourself and your students. This doesn't have to be a time-consuming or complicated process. Rather, it should be an enjoyable reflection on the course, your growth as a teacher, and your students' growth in their mindfulness practices.

Below are several tools and suggestions for assessment: self-assessment for you and your students; teacher assessment of student progress; and student assessment of the class.

Teacher Self-Assessment

Review your relationships. Reflect on how you and your students interact, trust each other, and show up authentically. How easily do students ask questions or ask for help? How readily do they trust you with their struggles, successes, and doubts? Do they believe you will be supportive, nonjudgmental, and helpful?

Review student progress and improvement. Success is more than one-time performance or test results. Consider how each student progressed since the first day. Have they improved their focus, calm, resilience, and ability to enter into informal practices?

Review your comfort, confidence, and preparation. How much has your class presence evolved since the first session? Are you more at ease with learning the material, leading meditations, and fielding questions? Are you able to find answers to questions (students' and your own) with adeptness and confidence in your reasoning?

Review class rapport and dynamics. A sign of a safe and effective learning environment is students feeling comfortable with each other and *not needing you at all times*. When they develop their own relationships, students expand their capacity to learn from and teach each other.

Review student struggles. Often, struggle is a sign of learning, as are frustration, regression, and confusion. Learning isn't a smooth or linear process, and growth can be seen in areas of difficulty. Notice how your students respond to struggles. Is their resilience increasing? Are they stuck on the same challenges, or do they experience new ones? Do they ask for help from you or their classmates?

Student Self-Assessment

You can use the following for discussion or ask students to write a more formal self-assessment.

1. What were your expectations of yourself when you began the course?
2. How have you met or not yet met those expectations?
3. What has been your biggest challenge during the course?
4. How have you approached this challenge?
5. What has been your biggest growth area in the course?
6. How did you make those gains?

7. What feels easier now than it did at the beginning of the course?
8. What new skills, knowledge, or abilities have you gained?
9. How do you think you have met or not met your instructor's expectations? Your fellow classmates' expectations?
10. What skills do you plan to continue working on, developing, and growing?

Student Evaluation of the Course

You may ask students to answer these questions anonymously and use their feedback for your own growth and development. A word of caution: student feedback can be extremely valuable and push you to grow and challenge yourself. However, anonymous feedback can also be emotionally charged and driven by any number of personal experiences. You should seek out other teachers with experience to offer perspective and help you glean value from student evaluations.

Ask students to rate the teacher's performance in the following areas. 1 is Very Poor; 2 is Poor; 3 is Neutral; 4 is Good; 5 is Excellent.

1. Rate the teacher's punctuality and preparation.
2. Rate the teacher's knowledge of the subject.
3. Rate the teacher's level of engagement and enthusiasm for the material.
4. Rate the teacher's ability to provide constructive feedback.
5. Rate the teacher's effectiveness in leading formal meditations.
6. Rate the teacher's ability to answer questions.
7. Rate the teacher's organization and classroom management.
8. Rate the teacher's effectiveness in leading group discussions.

Ask students to freely answer the following questions in writing.

1. What are the instructor's strengths?
2. In what areas can the instructor improve?
3. How did the instructor meet or exceed your expectations?
4. How did the instructor not meet your expectations?

Teacher Evaluation of Students

You may choose to offer students a personalized report or evaluation. This can be offered in the form of a rubric, a personal letter, a short paragraph, and email—however you feel most comfortable offering feedback.

1. Describe the student's performance in regular class sessions. Was their presence positive for other students? Did they contribute to discussions, reflections, partner work, and practices?
2. Describe the student's performance during formal meditation practices. Did they engage in practices with openness? Did they consistently show effort? Did they ask questions or ask for help when needed?
3. Describe the student's main areas of growth and improvement. Where have they developed skills, abilities, and knowledge?
4. Describe the student's main areas for further improvement. Where can they focus additional learning or development?
5. What personal recommendations, feedback, or direction can you offer for future practice?