

Teaching with Intention: Streamlined Lesson Planning

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There is a concept in Essentialism that looks towards only to core elements of a concept and process. Essentialism is in its essence an offshoot of Minimalism and is rooted in many of the same philosophical concepts. Japanese Minimalism is rooted in the traditions of Zen Buddhism. An astute example of this is the Tea Ceremony. Every form and function of the ceremony follows a ritualistic albeit formulaic mode of approach towards the process of serving tea.

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The tea ceremony is rooted in simplicity over complexity. We seek to achieve a set outcome with carefully choreographed movements. Streamlined lesson planning is the Higher Education equivalent of the tea ceremony. A large part of our selfcare as facilitators and lecturers is in ensuring that our approach to delivering content is simple yet effective. We owe this to our students. More importantly, we owe this to ourselves. Simply outlined:

Minimalist Principle: Simplicity over complexity.

Application: Use clear, repeatable structures for Lectures, Tutorials, and Assessments (e.g. Introduction | Core content | Discussion | application).

Result: Saves prep time, makes lessons easier to navigate for students, and builds consistency.

A formulaic approach to lesson delivery delivers consistency. Firstly, for our regular delivery of content and materials. Secondly, across multiple groups and facilitators delivering the same subject/tutorial. Lessons become easier to navigate as the use of templates and formal structures accustom students and staff to a set format. The creativity and pedagogical art then become key in its delivery of the set content for our students.

The aim of prioritising simplicity over complexity is ultimately time and care. An efficient approach to lesson planning allows for quicker planning. It also allows us to prioritise the pastoral care of our students and ourselves. Selfcare and ensuring the self is centred is important in the longevity and resilience of staff. A balanced and centred staff is a staff that remains productive and efficient.

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