A practical guide to class rep

By the Waikato Students’ Union (WSU)
At the end of the session:

– Develop your understanding of your role as class rep.
– Learn and apply skills to assist you in your role as a class rep.
– Know the support available to you as class rep.
Why do we need class rep?

– Representation
– Consultation
– Learning enhancement
You are an expert on your learning experience

Representation because....

You are an expert on your learning experience

Improved learning experience

Student views

Dialogue with staff
How to be an effective class rep?

- Publicity
- Research
- ABCD feedback
- Communicate

Keep the communication positive and constructive.
How to be an effective class rep?

- **Publicity** – introduce yourself and provide contact. Use your student email.

- **Research** - gather opinions or feedback on learning experience (the good and the ones that need improvement). Brainstorm solutions to the issue.
How to be an effective class rep?

– **ABCD** feedback - accurate, balanced, constructive and depersonalised feedback to the lecturer. Set periodic meetings.

– Communicate - keep your classmates informed of the progress of the feedback or discussion. Use email/meetings/online tool (i.e padlet)

Keep the communication positive and constructive.
ABCD feedback

The A,B,C,D of effective feedback

Accurate

Depersonalised

Effective

Balanced

Constructive
ABCD feedback

– Accurate – be specific and provide evidence. Avoid generalising.
– Balanced – areas of improvement and positives.
– Constructive – think of a solution to the issue.
– Depersonalised – avoid personal comments.
ABCD feedback – How would you do it?

The theory elements of the course are taught well, are interesting and understandable to the majority (17/20) of the class but the same number feel that it would be helpful to have more practical work to back up the theory. We also thought it would be good to have a clear understanding of the expectations on our assessments and how that’s related to the course outcome.

The whole course is really not well put together and the assessments are not clear and don’t fit well with the teaching at all.
After discussion with the class, we want to tell you that Mr Smith is a terrible lecturer who never gives assessments back on time.

After discussion with the class, we reckon we’ll benefit for the assessments to be returned early enough to learn from mistakes and help us identify the areas we need to work on.
Student Learning Experience

- Quality enhancement and assurance
- Guidance and support
- Curriculum
- Student progression and achievement
- Assessment and feedback
- Learning resources
- Learning and teaching process
Curriculum

Structured and clear course content.

- Are the learning objectives clearly stated and being followed?
- Does the curriculum being taught match your expectations from the information provided about the course?
Learning resources

Sufficient resources required for the course.

• Staff, text books, equipment, tools and appropriate clothing.
• Classrooms, labs, lecture theatres, IT, VLE resources, libraries.
Learning and teaching process

Learning experience and teaching methods used.

• The range of teaching methods that are used.
• Is it the right method for the type of course?
• Is it accessible?
Assessment and feedback

Appropriate assessments and quality feedback.

• Are assessments spaced out well?
• Are they the right kind of assessments for the type of module/unit/course?
• What kind of feedback is given? Is it of good enough quality?
• Does feedback help you see where and how you need to improve?
Student progression and achievement

The progression through the course.

- Are you able to progress easily from one module to the next?
- Are you able to evaluate your own personal progress throughout the course?
- Are further course opportunities and pathways made clear to you?
Guidance and support

Sufficient support and guidance provided.

- How much support are you receiving with your academic work?
- If you are struggling, where do you go for advice?
- Are you given clear guidance on what is expected of you as a student?
Quality enhancement and assurance

The University’s commitment to quality content.

• Do you feel that staff and the department are receptive to student concerns and suggestions?
• Do you feel that you and your class mates’ opinions are listened to?
• What improvements have been made to your course during your time of study?
• Course evaluation at the end of the semester.
Let’s get started...
In your course, what is good and what needs improvement?
Use ABCD feedback...
ABCD feedback

The A, B, C, D of effective feedback

- Accurate
- Depersonalised
- Effective
- Balanced
- Constructive
What's in it for class rep?

- Class rep
- Subject committee
- Faculty board rep
- Academic board rep
- Rep to uni committees
- Wider representation role
What’s in it for class rep?

– Gain valuable skills
  – Mediate, negotiate, gather and provide feedback constructively & maintain a positive relationship between the academic staff and your classmates.

– University recognition
  – EPP program, University participation component: www.waikato.ac.nz/go/epp

– Build your CV
Your support from the faculty

– providing safe environment to share your feedback on teaching and learning,
– facilitating communication between you and your classmates,
– holding regular meetings for feedback,
– providing opportunity of representation in the subject, faculty and university level;
Your support from the WSU

- developing the skills required as representatives
- ensuring you are given the opportunity to represent
- providing resources to facilitate your role as class rep
- facilitating your role as class rep through consultation session throughout the semester.
Update us through mid-semester progress form so we can better support you.
With the support system, you don’t need to

– Handle personal grievances (formal complain process and advocacy).
– Handle personal problems (refer to Counseling, Student learning, DSS etc).
– Deal with intense advocacy issue.
– Tolerate harassment (report to Security in urgent cases and to the WSU).

For mental health support, make an appointment by phone (07 838 4037) or in person, or go to student health room G.19 between 1-3pm to drop-in without an appointment.
Contact us at: voice@wsu.org.nz