

## Intention and reflection

Critical reflection is a valuable practice for understanding what we have learned as students, what skills we have gained, and how our coursework will impact our future plans. Reflection, I believe, is best practiced with the complementary action of intention setting. As students, intention setting allows us to guide our experiences, establish goals, identify the objectives of our work, and connect our work with our personal experiences.

At the beginning of the TTLO course, we set a number of intentions and goals for this session. My personal goals were to learn how to deliver courses via LMS platforms, gain online teaching experience, and identify the best practices for online teaching. I found that articulating my goals on the first day has provided me with an additional source of motivation to complete activities and has forged explicit links between the activities and my personal/professional development.

In my face-to-face courses, I regularly ask students to set their intentions on the first day of class. This entails asking students why they are studying Spanish and what they want to achieve during the course. In addition to these questions, I provide students with a copy of that level's ACTFL can-do questions. This helps students identify their current skills and imagine what they will be able to do at the end of the semester. On the final day of class, I return the students' original can-do statements and I ask them to reassess their skill inventory. From what I have observed, students are usually very satisfied with this activity because it provides them with concrete evidence of their progress as a language learner.

In an online course, I would like to continue the practice of intention setting by providing students with prompts and inventories to guide their intention-setting process. On the first day, I would model the activity that we did in this course and I ask students to post about their goals for the class on the discussion board. Like my face-to-face class, I would also ask students to complete a survey about their current language abilities. Based on my readings for this course, online learners benefit from additional sources of motivation and personalized feedback. Their responses to these initial activities would allow me to have a better sense of what their goals are and how I can provide appropriate feedback to help them achieve those goals. Although I have a number of intention activities from my face-to-face classes that I could adapt for the online environment, I would like to create more resources for online students to reflect on their learning. My initial plan for providing more reflection includes both periodic and end-of-course reflection questions. After each unit, I would ask students to consider how the information covered relates to their ability to communicate in Spanish, to their field of study, and to their understanding of cultures/societies. At the end of the course, I would ask students to consider whether the information from our course confirms or contradicts any assumptions that they had about themselves, others, or how things work. Because these questions relate to the ACTFL 5Cs, I would incorporate their responses as part of their grades.

Intention and reflection is also important for our work as instructors. As a teacher, I spend a lot of time reflecting on my teaching practice. After each class, I annotate my Power Point slides and my class notes regarding what worked well, what questions students had, and if there is anything that I should change or update. I think I would continue this practice as an online teacher. To have a better sense of the students' reception to the lessons, I would provide students with surveys after each unit. That way I could better gauge questions and points of uncertainty in the materials.