Review #1: Videotape of a Lesson

Marc Stephenson
California State University, Northridge
SED 600 Prof. Rivas
Review #1: Videotape of a Lesson

After watching a lesson presented to my Advanced Placement Chemistry class on February 16, 2007, I was noticed some strengths as well as a few weaknesses that need to be addressed in order for me to become a better teacher. During the approximately twenty-minute lesson I feel that I was able to help the students connect prior knowledge that I developed in previous lessons to the current lesson on hybrid orbitals. In two previous chapters we discussed electron configuration and covalent bonding. During this lesson I combined the two together and still added new material in order help the students learn about hybridization. Another aspect of my lesson that I felt was helpful to the students’ learning was my use of diagrams as well as three-dimensional models in order to better help the students to better visualize hybrid orbitals. I also feel the fact that I teach to bell enables the students to make the best use of the limited instructional time available at my school.

Even though I did do many things well I was able to notice quite a few aspects of my teaching that could use work. There were times during the lesson where I paused to allow the students to copy the information off of the board as well as to add any diagrams or extra notes of their own. While watching the videotape I noticed that the students who appear in the frame were waiting around for me to continue. Although it is possible that students who were off camera may have been writing, I am concerned that these short pauses will add up and lead to a larger loss of instruction time. In the future I will try to keep these pauses to minimum. This will allow for more time for questions from the students as well as allowing time for the completion of the large quantity of topics in the Advanced Placement class.
Another weakness that I noticed was that only one student seemed to be answering most of my questions. He was answering them so fast that most of the students were unable to respond. This does not allow for my more introverted students to process the question and thus may have left them confused. In the future I need to do a better job of training my students to wait to be called on in order to increase my wait time. This will allow the quieter students a chance to participate as well as it will allow all of the students a chance to process my questions.

I also need to work on staying on topic more. During the lesson in question, I forgot to turn off my e-mail pop up reminders. This caused a few distractions that my students pounced upon, leading to yet more wasted time. There were also other distractions during the twenty minutes that led to time not being used for instruction. If I can reduce this time as well as build in more wait time I feel that I will better be able to increase the learning of all of my students.

After watching the videotape I was unable to tell how well my students learned about orbital hybridization. While some of the students in frame appeared to be nodding their heads at times, this only represents one fifth of the total number of students in my class. I did answer questions from students who were confused. Since the bell rang prior to the completion my lesson, I was unable to complete my entire lesson plan. I had planned to have a wrap up exercise, which hopefully would have allowed me to assess the learning that was taking place. The next class period, I did include a warm-up activity, which did allow me to determine how well my students had comprehended the videotaped lesson. In the parts where my students seem to need help I supplemented my previous lesson.