

Workshop for Teachers of Quantitative Methods in Sociology and Social Policy: Wendy Olsen Abstract

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Venue: Oxford University Department of Sociology

Wendy Olsen discusses the concept of 'scaffolding' in embedding quantitative methods in social sciences / humanities classrooms. Scaffolding refers to the building blocks of knowledge. For social data the building blocks include reading tables, making tables, and critically interpreting column headings in tables, but there is much more. A table of learning outcomes at all levels helps give structure to the basic benchmarks that an Undergraduate in social science should achieve. Learning outcomes need to be expressed clearly and explicitly rather than being anodyne.

Wendy Olsen has started "flipping" some of her lectures. Most people think the focus of flipping is the use of video clips. Wendy Olsen points out that the lecturer can only successfully flip the classroom if they are aware that the web of learning outcomes involves bottom-to-top achievement of skill as well as crossways building of bridges between theory and empirical evidence. She gives two examples to illustrate flipping in this context. First she talks through an Economics flipped course unit, where Lectorials and Learning Journals helped students achieve higher grades. Secondly she talks about sociology Year One UG classrooms where the success in achieving advanced learning outcomes is dependent on graduate teaching assistants' (GTA) skills. She explores the use of delegation and teams in teaching. The session is useful in showing about twelve different methods of **active learning** which are useful in classroom situations. A summary sheet shows how they all work.

For more information about related workshops by Wendy Olsen see:

<http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/essted/workshops/index.html>