

OSF @ SCC March 5, 1999

Title of Issue: Maintain hunger for knowledge
Convener: Joe Swaba
Participants: M. Bender, E. El-Khawas, P. Kramer, M. Risley, T. Rodriguez, F. Watkins, L. Hicks, J. Bloyer, G. Raab

Discussion:

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Curricular change/reform
District-wide transferability

Growing pains (structure built --> no students) Low enrollment

Pathway

choices - - balance
idealism - - realism

need flexibility
Extra mile -
Pre-assessment
Ready when student is ready to learn
Alternative delivery
Assessment
Honest dialogue
"Customer" service + morale
Professionalism
Credibility
Faculty assessment
Create culture that supports
Make learning a priority
Service-learning
"Personal"
"Holistic
Information

Overarching picture - difficult
Reinventing "wheel"
Turf
Indifference
Professionalism
Faculty training/orientation
Many hats [potential to impact] teaching
Frustrating process prior to classroom
Weak links
Mis-information

Title of Issue:
How do we address - information, knowledge, understanding?

Convener: Holly McKenzie-Beene

Participants: H. Beene, B. Shoenberg

Discussion:

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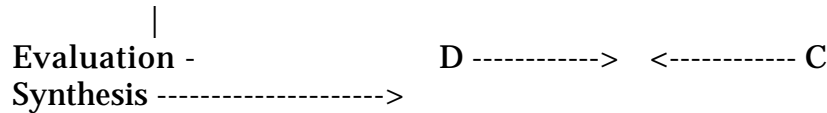
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Bob's web

Storage/Retrieval [64MB]

Universal Truths

$$2 + 2 = 5$$



Title of Issue: Do grades reflect learning?

Convener: Irwin Noyes

List of Participants: R. Dlugosz, D. Hutchinson, J. Avianantos, M. Griego, B. Fahey

Discussion:

- Wish we could do away with the structure and just tell people we're going to do some learning here, if you're interested come on over.
- What do we even mean by learning?
- Are we talking about degrees of learning?
- In occupational programs, students can take certain tests to demonstrate that they have certain competencies.
- In some disciplines students can't learn 60% of the thing; they've got to learn all of it, or they won't be able to move on.
- Tying the written test to grades doesn't necessarily work because being able to regurgitate information in a test doesn't necessarily mean the student has learned anything.
- Integrating courses is a good way to foster true learning.
- Teacher expectation affects learning.
- Attitude impacts teacher and student.
- Grades do not represent a consistent level of learning across the country, within schools, within districts, etc.
- Environment has a lot to do with learning.
- It's a terribly complex issue.
- In math, self-paced learner is learning best, according to measured competencies. Does the appropriateness of self-paced learning depend on the discipline? There is a college in Nebraska that does everything this way.
- Articulation is a problem when you try to do modules that represent partial completion.
- Grades represent towing the line.
- Grades are not the issue.
- You can make grades represent real learning if you can figure out a way to recognize real learning.
- The question is can we figure out how to recognize and measure real learning? Can we respond to what we know about how students learn? Maybe we ought to change the way we try to teach them, use more appropriate technology, teach them in the way that they can learn.
- How to make your subject accessible to students with disabilities.

- What are we really accomplishing when we juggle things around to accommodate students with disabilities so they can learn as well and equally to other students.
- There are things that matter that you can't really grade and maybe you shouldn't grade, but they matter in the preparation of people for the work world.
- Can't really teach "heart", and can't really grade prospective teachers on their "heart", but it still matters tremendously.
- If you ask students who's the best teacher on the campus, how will they respond? What criterion will mean "best" to them?
- Cultural sensitivity training of nursing students: can teach students to understand other cultures. Question is can we and should we grade that? Maybe we ought to recognize and accept the fact that there are some things we can't teach and can't measure. When you are responsible for preparing prospective teachers, or nurses, or crucial professions of that kind, you need to measure some of those personality/affect things.
- Great minds in the past learned through dialogue with their masters; that system worked. But we couldn't do it now, because there are too many. Because the system won't pay us to work that way. Because their learning won't be recognized in the real world.
- If you don't give students grades, they have trouble getting on in the real world.
- There are schools that don't give grades and their students are accepted. Interviewed groups of students to find out how they prepared for test, to discover best ways to study. The learning style that matches the teacher is the one that will get you good grades.
- Is there a way of studying/learning that is suitable for a particular discipline? The fact that the natural sciences still do labs suggests that there are certain things that have to be learned in this way.
- The multiple intelligences theory is relevant: people in similar disciplines tend to have similar kinds of intelligence. Shouldn't put students into a preferred learning style box and leave them there. They can learn to learn in different modes, and add different learning styles to their repertoire.
- Student as teacher is important in community colleges.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO ACT ON THESE ISSUES?

- In teaching, be conscious of and present with your partly disparate points of view.
- Be intentional.
- Make sure that what students are asked to do as the basis for a course grade versus the exercise of critical and analytic abstracts. Never ask for the repetition of facts.
- For clear presentation to others -oral, -written, -electronic
- Clarify my own understanding of the challenge.
- Find colleagues who have similar concern.
- Develop information literacy coalition.
- Develop set of exercises related to my courses and share.
- Investigate friends of the library at my college.
- Education really comes in many shapes, sizes, colors, etc. BUT it sticks! and does not leave harm if you place it, then move it, and interestingly post it energized from a mistake.

- Keep talking .. the power of explanation when you're explaining yourself you understand better (clarify) what you have to say.
- As a whole, college or system start smaller. If we might get together with different departments from top to bottom all areas to address the issue of student success. Point out the problems, the issues from all aspects and try to work together as a whole to solve or at least make these issues a little easier for everyone and mostly the student. We had a diverse group of people in our group with different aspects of the business with a lot of good input. I believe Rio Salado College would be a good college we could learn from with a very unique structure and college.
- Brainstorm with students across the college - ways they would like to work, learn, etc.
- Ongoing cross-discipline discussions - [Faculty and student services to brainstorm solutions].
- We can change our terminology and talk in terms of learning rather than teaching.
- We can stop and think about what it is we are really trying to accomplish.
- Cross-discipline, cross-departmental integrated communication model.
- We can put our money where our mouth is.
- We can start challenging some of the present assumptions that structure things.
- Continue - expand the dialogue to "the process" change the culture/value; develop rubric of the learning process; assess competence in conjunction with this rubric; alternative rewards; institutional self-assessment; departmental self assessment; faculty self-assessment.
- Flexibility in the hierarchy structure. If a faculty or adjunct is willing to go the extra mile show support even if it takes a little extra in the financial department - training teachers to be teachers.
- Ongoing workshops for faculty ... Topics like today w/techniques, renew, refresh, retool.

PLEASE SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS AFTERNOON'S PROCESS...

- Salty snacks, cheese and crackers.
- We need more sessions like today - with faculty, staff, and administrators present; lots of faculty present.
- I found it very helpful and encouraging. Would like to participate in more "local" and "massive" endeavors.
- Focus discussion more closely so that we get down to brass tacks more quickly.
- As an individual instructor, I experiment in small ways. If the idea of process works - I find ways to grow it.
- Invite students to attend sessions like this. Allow students to participate in the "learning to learn" process.
- Improve process? Pre-deliver potential questions, a1 feedback to interested participants. P.S. Website is great!
- Bring students in. Maybe put more emphasis on going to a second group to have more input.