

Monday, November 12, 2018

### Course Reflection

This course has reviewed a variety of learning and facilitation techniques related to pedagogy in various course delivery modalities. Particularly various strategies for helping students achieve the higher stages of Blooms Taxonomy in engaging course curriculum and content. We read two books. Those were Teaching Students how to Learn and Blended Learning Across the Disciplines, Across the Academy. The first book discussed McGuire's (2015) experience with teaching pedagogy and the importance of meta-cognitive strategies. Glazer and Rhem (2011) offered alternative methodologies for effective content delivery online. These readings coupled with our weekly meetings and online assignments gave us an overview of instructional strategies as well as UTC policy and processes to give us each a running start to our new roles at UTC. While the training was extensive, there are a couple of themes of interest which have benefited me in this course.

One aspect which was very helpful for me in structuring how students learn information was the use of Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy as part of the course curriculum. Dr. Dawn Ford made this recommendation in one of her responses to my posts regarding meta-cognition. In this post, she suggested that I would have a course content related to teaching students about Bloom's Taxonomy and that students could better understand the differences of memorizing versus using and adapting content for their needs. This approach serves to give students a way to think about how they learn material and help them with reflective strategies related to their performance and retention of material. I plan to implement this approach in future coursework to give students the tools needed to understand how to study smarter not harder.

Another strategy which has helped me significantly is the role of meaningful contribution in class (in lieu of attendance). I was first introduced to this idea by my colleagues in the Learning and Leadership Doctoral Program, however, our course discussions with our Walker Center instructors, and in the group, conversations have helped me see that meaningful contributions are more than simply responding to instructor questions. It is related to assertive and informed discussion among the students as facilitated by the instructor. If students are properly prepared, they should have insights and opinions regarding course content which transcends simply memorization of the various topic areas of the course. Further, these exercises can align with course objectives as a demonstration of competence or mastery as the course content progresses.

Further, from the social cognitive perspectives, he helps elevate the course level expectations among students setting a social bar of achievement as well as a minimum of satisfactory engagement in-class exercises. In one perspective, perspective set these standards based on the class culture and the personalities in the class. This can be beneficial as students feel they are driving the discussions particularly for challenging or ambiguous topics. Alternatively, this can be problematic if students are not working to further the course content or are proactive in their learning. This is where we as instructors serve as facilitators to push the conversation forward and monitor progress regarding course and weekly objectives.

Finally, another strategy that I have been giving serious consideration to is the use of online curriculum and lectures to complement course content. This would be particularly helpful related to courses such as statistics where the content of the course is difficult, and the lectures can help explain content further. I already have experience with creating online course content particularly related to step by step processes which require practice and decision-based workflows such as determining which statistical test to run or how to move forward with data based on decision trees. I plan to implement this in the future for statistic-based courses to help students better understand the content while also creating real-life simulations where they will solve various problems using the information they have learned in the course.

### **In Conclusion**

In conclusion, I have learned various strategies for delivering effective course content. Particularly, I have learned to capitalize on UTC Learn to offer additional information and support to my curriculum. I find the use of Bloom's Taxonomy in-class useful, reflectively connecting students. I also see the use of meaningful contribution as empowering students and holding them responsible for their learning. I also see the value of offering supportive videos and content as part of the online aspects of a traditional face to face course. I think the most important aspect as our role as an instructor is to practice humble inquiry. We should be open to making changes and staying current to the career landscape staying mindful of our students needs.

### **Works Cited**

Bloom, B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.

Glazer, F.S. and Rhem, J. (2011). *Blended Learning Across the Disciplines, Across the Academy*. Stylus Publishing.

McGuire, S. Y. & S. McGuire (2015). *Teach students how to learn. Strategies you can incorporate into any course to improve student metacognition, study skills, and motivation*. Steeling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing

## Teaching Philosophy

To Whom It May Concern:

*“Education is a social process; education is growth; education is not a preparation for life but is life itself.”*

These are the words of John Dewey, the father of modern American education. Dewey was a pragmatist. Pragmatism is most concerned with the result versus the process of achieving a result. In other words, when individuals seek the result of education and the process of education ends in the appropriate result, and change is achieved. While my education transgresses the psychological, religious studies, adult training, and educational disciplinary boundary, I see Dewey’s views as profound as it is a paradigm of objectively observable results versus traditional pedagogy. To this end, we live in an exciting time of groundbreaking learning technologies coupled with vast arrays of academic literature on effective teaching and learning strategies. Yet, I have observed many faculty who still practice the traditional banking model of instruction where they may solely lecture in their face-to-face courses or present only videos and reading in online courses. While many undergraduate and graduate students have been raised in a classic face to face learning environment, their retention and understanding of the literature can be limited. This is demonstrated in comparison to the varied delivery of course content which not only empowers student participation and engagement but also provides inter-student interactions which are a safer space to disclose student ignorance or more importantly engage poor study habits. As a trained research psychologist, it is common to test and change methods to ensure validity. Regarding education, I feel that many college educators prefer tradition over carefully scrutinized content. From my own experience, I would propose the education is not something that can be automatic but rather something that is consistently measured and proactively adjusted. Beyond pragmatism, I also see myself as an intentionalist as students should be actively engaged to produce intrinsic motivation within themselves to be effective and studious.

Part of my own perspective on intentionalism goes beyond the philosophical underpinnings of the term. In many regards, we as educators are fortunate to create curricula to achieve the institutional and departmental goals of higher education through demonstrable competencies. In creating proper structure, I believe that educators must be adaptive and assertive with students while following course objectives. We see more first-generation students going to college and graduate school. We also see many adult students going back to school as well. Part of my theory of intentionalism includes educator responsibility to follow up with students outside the classroom. I believe educators should take a mindful as well as professional interest in the success of students. Teaching is not simply a 9 to 5 job but rather a social necessity if the United States is to stay competitive in the global marketplace. Moreover, each student who enters college has at the root of their aspirations, the American Dream.

I believe knowledge is gained socially through shared experience. I also believe one’s background and their experience has something to contribute to the overall social narrative of academia and by extension, our society. So as an instructor, I prefer highly structured discussion classes as well as

group exercises. I like engaging students with real-life examples for which they must solve a problem or propose studies related to a topic (including a design). I also like sharing content online to help the students reflect on their learning and provide additional resources capitalizing on media and interactive training modules and testing. Yet, with these various methodologies, I find my teaching style and instructional design is continually evolving. Beyond the instructional theory and design, I also believe that education is preparation for corporate culture. Depending on the modality of instruction (online, hybrid, or face to face), I find adaption to classroom culture

As an educator, I want to teach within and beyond the curriculum to prepare students for corporate America. While teaching part-time at UTC and as a student in graduate school, I worked full time in a variety of jobs including roles in Human Resources, Corporate Training, Information technology Management, and Employee Metrics and Effectiveness. Additionally, I have worked in the Information Technology industry for over ten years. This includes online learning, instructional design and face to face curriculum for companies. My professional career has implemented education and technology in a variety of jobs throughout my adult life. I have been fortunate to work in three important American cultures, one as an educator, as an HR, and IT professional. This experience has given me a valuable perspective on the kind of characteristics students need to be successful following graduation.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I have a strong work ethic and I am a firm believer in education's role in keeping America competitive and to stay competitive must adapt to the changing marketplace. This includes students demonstrating skills and knowledge pertinent to their job. I believe that colleges have a major role to play both directly and indirectly in bettering our society for the future. I have observed firsthand graduate struggling within the workplace. I understand the deficiencies many students have, and I have the tools to help them overcome them. I believe I have much to bring to the educational culture and would appreciate the chance to speak with the hiring committee in person. Thank you for this opportunity to share my philosophy and interest.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Silver', with a horizontal line underneath.

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