Welcome!

As you come in, please fill out the assessment survey
Introducing and Assessing Learner-Centered Principles To and Among the Next Generation of College Professors

Karen Kurotsuchi Inkelas
Jill Jones
Josipa Roksa
Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
University of Virginia

Dorothe Bach
Teaching Resource Center
University of Virginia

Deandra Little
Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning
Elon University
Outline of session

- Overview of graduate student seminar
- Mini-demonstration of one seminar activity
- Overview and results of the assessments
- Questions and audience discussion
Funding:
- $59,000 2-year grant from Teagle Foundation ($35,000) with cost-sharing from UVa ($24,000)

Number of participants:
- 2012: 26
- 2013: 31
  57 total

Participants from 19 departments in:
- Arts & Sciences
- Engineering
- Architecture
- Education
Participants with varying teaching experience
- 1/3, no experience (mostly in Education, Engineering, & Sciences)
- 1/3 moderate level of experience
- 1/3 considerable amount of experience

Number of contact hours: 22 (9 x 2 hr sessions + 4 hr retreat)

Non certificate-bearing, zero credit course; listed under a Provost mnemonic “UNST”
Graduate student seminar goals

a) understand and begin to apply basic theories of student learning, development, and motivation
b) reflect on concepts such as teacher-centered vs. learner-centered instruction
c) apply principles of backward course design
d) generate strategies for dealing with critical classroom situations
e) analyze beliefs and practices about teaching
f) design and conduct a class session using a variety of instructional strategies.
Graduate student seminar topics

1. Introduction to the Learning Paradigm
2. Reflective Teaching Statements
3. Student Motivation
4. Course Design 1: Goals and Assessment (4 hour retreat)
5. Course Design 2: Learning Activities
6. Teaching as Work and Vocation
7. Teaching Methods
8. Cognitive Development and Classroom Climate
9. Peer Observation
10. Teaching Portfolio Celebration
Activities

- Discuss readings online and in-class
- Design a syllabus & sample lesson plan
- Observe a class
- Give a mini-teaching demonstration
- Write a reflective teaching statement
Scenario

Imagine that you are teaching a required introductory undergraduate lecture course in your field. Four weeks into the semester, you are concerned about the substantial number of students who performed poorly on the first exam that you just handed back.

Knowing that the material might be difficult for some, you have frequently reminded your students that they could stop by during office hours if they need help. Only a couple have taken you up on the offer so far. At the end of each class, you also routinely ask, “Does anyone have any questions?” but you are typically met with silence.

As you leave the class, you overhear a group of students grumbling about their grades on the exam. One student shrugs her shoulders and says, with resignation, “I’m not surprised. I’m just not good in this subject. But I had to take it for my major.” Others nod as they gather up their books.
Using your understanding of the teaching and learning process (and relevant research, if possible), please answer the following questions:

I. **Problem:** In one to two sentences, please describe the most plausible problems raised in this case related to teaching and learning.

II. **Re-active and Pro-active Strategies:** Choosing two of the most plausible problems, please describe strategies for a) addressing to the problems now that it has occurred, and b) preventing it from occurring in future classes:

• How would you address this problem to improve the situation going forward? Please explain why this strategy/these strategies would be effective.

• How would you prevent this problem from occurring in the future. Please explain why this strategy/these strategies would be effective.
Assessing the impact of college teaching

Teaching observations

Participants’ perceptions and satisfaction with the seminar

Participants’ beliefs, knowledge, and practices about teaching & learning

Participants’ teaching performance

Students’ perceptions about the participants’ teaching performance

Students’ learning

1. Self-efficacy
2. Syllabus toolbox
3. Teaching scenario

Overview of the assessments

- Uses pre/post design to measure:

  **Attitudes**
  - Perceptions of teaching self-efficacy

  **Behaviors**
  - Priorities when constructing a new syllabus:
  - Analysis of challenging teaching dilemma
Instrumentation

Perceptions of teaching self-efficacy

- Perceptions of teaching confidence on 1=very little to 7=completely scale
  - Instructor-centered example: confidence in keeping the class on task during class periods
  - Learner-centered example: confidence in integrating different techniques to assess students’ learning

- Formed two scales:
  - Self-efficacy with instructor-centered activities ($\alpha=.88$)
  - Self-efficacy with learner-centered activities ($\alpha=.93$)

Instrumentation

Perceptions of teaching self-efficacy

Instructor-centered Self-efficacy

Learner-centered Self-efficacy

POST

PRE

Very little

Completely

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

POST

PRE

14

103
Instrumentation

Priorities when constructing a new syllabus

- Open-ended question
  - Asked first, before the list
  - Meant to gauge first impressions

- List of components
  - Compares what respondents check from a list versus what they identify off of the tops of their heads
Priorities when constructing a new syllabus

Open-ended results

Top 5 largest changes in POST versus PRE syllabus components written in (open-ended)

- Learning goals and objectives
- Tips for success
- Materials
- Course prerequisites
- Grading procedures

-40% -30% -20% -10% 0% 10% 20% 30%
Priorities when constructing a new syllabus

Results from components list

Top 5 largest changes in POST versus PRE syllabus components selected from list

- Fostering student/student interactions
- Rationale for pedagogical techniques
- Fostering faculty/student interactions
- Learning goals and objectives
- Assessment goals
Instrumentation

Analysis of challenging teaching scenario

- Meant to serve as closest assessment to actual teaching (behaviors)

- Asks respondents to identify both the:
  - Diagnosis of the problem(s)
  - Recommendations for reactive and proactive solutions

- Analyzed using rubric
  - Used two independent raters
  - All scores greater than 1 point in discrepancy were discussed and resolved
Results

Analysis of challenging teaching scenario

Identification of appropriate issue

Identification of appropriate strategies

Instructor-centered response

Learner-centered response
Example of learner-centered response:

“The classroom environment sounds like a typical “you sit while I talk” lecture design. The only students who will do well in this kind of environment are highly self-motivated learners. In a lower level course taught to students with a variety of backgrounds and a variety of reasons for taking the course, [the instructor] needs to find ways to engage and motivate all the students.”

Example of instructor-centered response:

Students were at fault (e.g., lazy students) or that other external factors (e.g., class offered at bad time of the day), beyond the instructors’ control, were the possible reason for the resulting student performance and lack of engagement.
Case Study 4

Dan Muller left the classroom frustrated. He was teaching quantitative research methods at UVa for the first time. His course was going well overall, but he was concerned about the substantial number of students who performed poorly on the mid-term he had just handed back.

Knowing that some of the material might be difficult for some, Dan had frequently reminded his students that they could stop by during office hours if they needed help. Only a couple had taken him up on the offer so far. At the end of each class, he also routinely asked, “Does anyone have any questions?” but he was typically met with silence. He couldn’t tell if the students were bored, confused, or just lazy.

As he left the class today, Dan overheard a group of students grumbling about their grades on the exam. One student shrugged her shoulders and said, with resignation, “I’m not surprised. I’m just not good with numbers. But I had to take it for my major.” Others nodded as they gathered up their books.

Using your understanding of the teaching and learning process (and relevant research, if possible), please answer the following questions:

1. In one to two sentences, describe the problem(s) raised in this case.
2. What are the most important underlying factors that may be contributing to the problem?
3. Given your appraisal, what would you do to best address the situation at this point? Please explain why that would be effective.
4. What counsel would you give the instructor for future courses? Please explain why that should prevent the issue occurring in the future.
Scenario

Imagine that you are teaching a required introductory undergraduate course in your field for a group of 40 students. Four weeks into the semester, you are concerned about the substantial number of students who performed poorly on the first exam that you just handed back.

Knowing that the material might be difficult for some, you have frequently reminded your students that they could stop by during office hours if they need help. Only a couple have taken you up on the offer so far. At the end of each class, you also routinely ask, “Does anyone have any questions?” but you are typically met with silence.

As you leave the class, you overhear a group of students grumbling about their grades on the exam. One student shrugs her shoulders and says, with resignation, “I’m not surprised. I’m just not good in this subject. But I had to take it for my major.” Others nod as they gather up their books.

Identify the Problem

Using your understanding of the teaching and learning process (and relevant research, if possible), please answer the following questions.

Note: Please do not take more than 30 minutes to answer these questions and do not consult external resources (e.g., class reading, web sources)

In one to two sentences, please describe the most plausible problems raised in this case related to teaching and learning.
Identify Proactive and Reactive Strategies

Choosing two of the most plausible problems, please describe strategies for a) addressing the problems now that they have occurred and b) preventing them from occurring in future classes.

Restate Problem 1:

How would you address this problem to improve the situation for the rest of this course? Please explain why this strategy/these strategies would be effective.

How would you prevent this problem from occurring in future courses? Please explain why this strategy/these strategies would be effective.

Restate Problem #2:

How would you address this problem to improve the situation for the rest of this course? Please explain why this strategy/these strategies would be effective.

How would you prevent this problem from occurring in future courses? Please explain why this strategy/these strategies would be effective.
Collaboration between Resource Center and Research Center

- **Necessary conditions:**
  - Equal investment and excitement for assessment initiatives yields increased response rates
  - Data collection using online questionnaire software and blogs (e.g., WordPress)
  - Routine meetings between assessment team and teaching team
Collaboration between Resource Center and Research Center

**Benefits:**
- Ability to make curricular decisions based on assessment practices and findings
- Results that appeal to multiple audiences including practitioners and researchers
- Align assignments with assessment initiatives
Questions and Discussion

Potential topics:

✓ How you might implement versions of both the seminar and the assessment on your campuses

✓ What other activities or assessments we should consider in either the seminar or the assessment