

**Faculty Friday
Techniques for Promoting Engagement in Online Courses**

**Friday, February 6, 2009
University of West Florida Commons Auditorium**

Engaging Students in Online Courses

Discussion of strategies for engaging students and creating active learning experiences in online courses.

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Download Presentation Documents: <http://uwf.edu/ddawson/engagement>

What Employers Need and Related Effective Practices for Engagement

(Report from the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise: College Learning for the New Global Century), Effective Educational Practices , Good Practices in Undergraduate Education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)

UWF Seniors who work more than 20 hours /week off campus – 54%

UWF Seniors who are providing some care for dependents living with them – 62%

Most important skills to employers, associated with good instructional practices:

- Teamwork Skills – 44%
 - Learning Communities
 - Collaborative Assignments and Projects
 - Internships
- Critical Thinking/Reasoning – 33%
 - Internships
 - Active Learning
 - High Expectations
-
- Oral/Written Communication – 30%
 - Writing-Intensive Courses
 - Time on Task
 - Cooperation among Students
 - Prompt Feedback
- Ability to Assemble/Organize Information – 21%
 - Collaborative Assignments and Projects

Challenge Questions for Increasing Student Engagement in Online Teaching

1. The online environment is expected to be asynchronous. Given this, isn't it unfair to ask students to respond to other students during a session?
2. In face-to-face participation, you would not expect every student to respond in a class, so why is this expected in the online environment?
3. There is an expectation of anonymity in online courses. How do you safeguard the privacy of a student response, or inform students about the non-private nature of public responses?
4. If students are expected to participate in engaging activities as part of the course, what percentage of the grade should be based on these?
5. We have an expectation that teaching online classes is optimal with class sizes in the range 20-30 students. However, I have 50 students in my courses. Can this work? What will work best and what will fail in this environment?
6. Team-based assignments are unfair in online courses where students expect asynchronous activities, so why use them?
7. If I use team-based activities in a course, should there be a Team Leader? If so, what are the best strategies for creating/acknowledging a Team Leader?
8. If I use team-based activities in a course, what are the best ways to provide feedback to the team on their efforts, and the efforts of each member and the Leader?
9. We've talked about increasing student engagement in courses. What about increasing it across a program or regional area? What is online community for a program and what are some ways to build it?
10. What is a quiz party? How do I discourage this? How do I promote this?
11. How do we mediate negative feedback from faculty regarding online courses and programs?
12. Promoting online courses and programs at UWF is professional suicide. So, why do it?
13. Teaching is a performance art. What are the tools to retain that as part of the educational experience at UWF in online courses and programs?
14. How do we encourage student evaluation to know if the "engaging activities" are having any impact?
15. Where a course has been offered both face-to-face and online – how do the following data compare between the two: average grade earned in the course, amount of information to which the students were exposed and tested over, time invested by students and level of participation in "engaging activities", amount of communication between instructor and students, etc.

Uses of Elluminate to Increase Student Engagement in Online Teaching

Advising

- Prerecord common problems
- Schedule just in time as needed

Office Hours

- Regularly schedule
- Schedule just in time as needed

Journal Club

- Invite students
- Invite community members
- Invite visiting scholars
- Invite speakers from outside Pensacola

Desktop Sharing

- Demonstrate problem solving

Student Study/Teamwork Sessions

- Provide “Web Conferencing” link in navigation bar to launch Elluminate automatically
- Encourage students to study together
- Encourage students to work on team-based projects with web conferencing

Uses of Second Life to Increase Student Engagement in Online Teaching

Course Meetings

- To explore a particular site together

Scavenger Hunts

- For course related terms
- For course related activities

Uses of eLearning to Increase Student Engagement in Online Teaching

eLearning Portal for Student Associations

- Encourage web conferencing
- Discussion forums for coordinating activities

eLearning Portal for Programs

- Convey high expectations upon acceptance
- Links to advising resources, forms, etc.
- Links to lectures and quizzes provided as tutorials to prepare for core courses
- Links to videos of student activities
- Links to student meetings held in Elluminate
- Links to interviews with employers of previous students and their expectations
- Discussion forums for:
 - Advising
 - volunteer activities
 - recent research activities of faculty/UWF related to program
 - job opportunities
 - conference/travel opportunities
 - journals/researchers students should be learning about/tracking in the program

Sample Use of Discussion Forums to Increase Student Engagement in Online Teaching

Partners in Learning Discussion Forum

Welcome to the Partners in Learning Discussion Forum in Introduction to Bioinformatics! This forum is here to promote student-to-student interaction and improve student learning outcomes in this course.

This forum will:

- Encourage the development and exchange of successful learning strategies within this course.
- Fulfill UWF's strategic priority of inspiring and achieving the highest levels of student learning, creativity, and success that encourage the development of individual potential in students, faculty, and staff.
- Facilitate peer reviews of products associated with student learning outcomes.

Students who request help here will be matched with a peer, or multiple peers over the course of the semester. Partners will visit each other's course pages to learn about and share advice on the skills they are acquiring in this course and how a struggling student can achieve higher levels of skill attainment.

If you need help, post here with a subject line, "**I need a learning partner**". In your posting, be honest and state where your problems are. Be very specific! If you happen to be matched with a partner who later cannot assist you, do not hesitate to post again with the subject line, "I need a learning partner". If you can offer any assistance, respond to the posting of a classmate with the subject line, "**I'll be your partner on this skill**". Provide advice, helpful hints, and any guidance you think will be helpful. Any number of partnerships are permitted, and all students who participate in this forum (on either side - either seeking help or providing help) will receive extra credit at the end of the semester for doing so.

Please keep in mind, this is a "partner" program - not to be used to ask other students to do your work, but to build partnerships to improve individual learning. If you repeatedly use this area to ask for assistance last minute, your postings will be flagged as a "Slacker Partner" and no extra credit will be awarded.

Sample Team-Based Participation Feedback Quiz

Course: **Introduction to Bioinformatics**

Program: **Master of Public Health**

Quiz: **MILESTONES I: Providing Participation Feedback on Your Term Project Teammates**

1. Which team did you serve on?
2. List the FIRST and LAST name of the person or persons on your team who took a lead role or roles in completing these milestones:
3. List the FIRST and LAST names of the members of your team that you believe provided SIGNIFICANT help on these milestones:
4. List the FIRST and LAST names of the members of your team that you believe provided an AVERAGE AMOUNT of help on these milestones:
5. List the FIRST and LAST names of the members of your team that you believe provided LITTLE HELP or HELP OF NO VALUE on these milestones:
6. Did you rank yourself within the categories above? If not, please DO SO NOW, so you can answer "Yes" below. Yes/No
7. In your opinion, was the person or persons who acted as a team leader in completing these milestones effective and responsive enough to deserve a small bonus on this assignment for doing so? Yes/ No
8. If you answered "No" to the previous question regarding the effectiveness of your teammate(s) who assumed lead role(s), please provide feedback here to support your opinion:
9. In your opinion, who on your team needs an intervention email from me to ensure they are pulling their own weight in team-based assignments? Provide FIRST and LAST names, please, and BE HONEST. It is MUCH better for me to remind students early in the semester about limited or marginal participation, before it significantly and negatively impacts the Term Project. I value your professional and constructive feedback, and your teammates will too, especially as they prepare to enter the workforce with the degree they are pursuing!
10. Please provide any additional constructive comments regarding your individual or group participation in this course thus far. If you haven't done your best, state that, with a plan for how you will improve over the semester. If you are doing well, feel free to state that as well.

Exam Security / Academic Integrity Strategies Employed in Online Courses and Programs

| Number | Exam Security / Academic Integrity Strategy |
|--------|---|
| 1. | Honor Code: have students sign upon admission to course or program |
| 2. | D2L setting: disable right click - do not allow usage of right-click when taking course exams |
| 3. | D2L setting: disable pager access - do not allow the sending or reception of pager messages while taking exams |
| 4. | D2L setting: Respondus lockdown browser required to take exams (restricts browsing/opening software outside the exams) |
| 5. | D2L setting: Respondus lockdown browser required to view exam feedback and results (restricts running other software while viewing) |
| 6. | Randomize the questions on each exam |
| 7. | Randomize the answers to the questions on each exam |
| 8. | Use expanded Question Library - pull a subset of questions different for each student for each exam |
| 9. | Change exams each semester |
| 10. | Use proctored exams |
| 11. | Use Elluminate sessions and confirm student identity as part of exams |
| 12. | Use Elluminate sessions and confirm student identity as part of academic integrity strategies in course assignments |
| 13. | D2L setting: notification email upon exam completion (to confirm timing of submission of exam and IP address of exam) |
| 14. | D2L setting: IP address restriction for exam launching |
| 15. | D2L setting: password protection on exam launching |
| 16. | Use internship requirement under the guidance of a local preceptor as part of academic integrity strategies in program |

School of Allied Health and Life Sciences – ONLINE Master of Public Health program
Spring 2008 Quality Enhancement Project
SUSSAI, SO WHAT!!!:
Improving Online Teaching Effectiveness Based on SUSSAI Feedback

Purpose: Data from this quality enhancement project is designed to engage faculty in self-reflection on SUSSAI student feedback provided for two instances of an online course (before and after the incorporation of one or more new instructional strategies).

Limitations: Please consider the results of this analysis in the context of differences in response rate or student populations between the semesters plotted.

Course Name:

Impacted programs:

Master of Public Health

Master of Science in Administration-Biomedical/Pharmaceutical

Instructor(s):

Semesters Taught Fully Online: Spring 2006, Summer 2006, Fall 2006, Fall 2007, Spring 2008 (in progress)

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| A. First offering online: | Spring 2006 |
| B. 2 nd most recent offering online: | Fall 2006 |
| C. Most recent offering online (w/ SUSSAIs): | Fall 2007 |

Prior to reviewing the attached graphs, please describe new instructional strategies implemented in most recent offering online (compared to second most recent offering online):

Strategy #1:

Strategy #2:

Strategy #3:

After reviewing the attached graphs, provide impressions of student response to changes in instructional strategies:

Strategy #1:

Strategy #2:

Strategy #3:

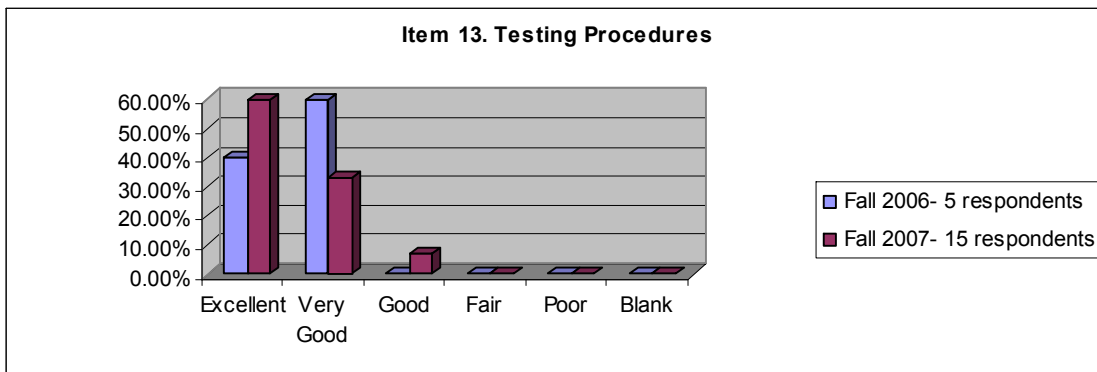
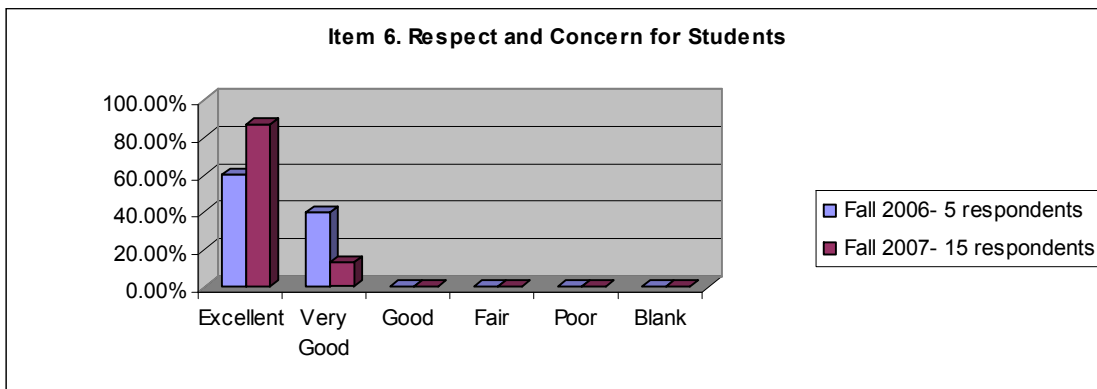
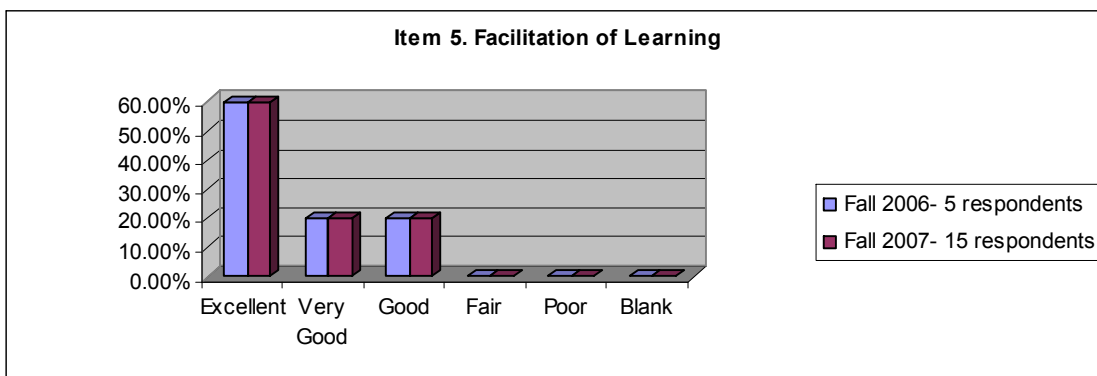
For future eJams, please circle SUSSAI items you would like suggestions for improvement/best practices:

- Item 1 Item 2 Item 3 Item 4 Item 5 Item 6
- Item 7 Item 8 Item 9 Item 10 Item 11 Item 12
- Item 13 Item 14 Item 15 Item 16 Item 17 Item 18

Include graphs of Items 1-18 here.

Graphs can plot 1st offering with the last two offerings or plot two most recent offerings, etc.

Example graphs for Items 5, 6, and 13 for two most recent offerings of a course:



Peer Evaluation Rubric

Group Number:

Evaluator:

Group Member Being Evaluated:

Score:

| | 1 point | 2 points | 3 points | Score |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--------------|
| Accessibility | Rarely responds to messages, does not participate actively in group discussions | Responds to messages, but late. Agrees to group decisions, but does not significantly contribute to discussions | Actively communicates. Initiates communication. Provides leadership in many group discussions | |
| Reliability | Does not commit to contributing content, or has many excuses for failing to deliver content agreed upon. Does not show for electronic meetings. | Delivers content, but late, or in incomplete form. Often late to and/or ill-prepared for electronic meetings | Always delivers what is agreed upon without prompting. Always fully prepared for meetings. | |
| Contribution to Planning | Does not participate in planning activities. | Passive participation with no in-depth development of position or opinions related to issues under discussion. Makes few or irrelevant suggestions. | Takes initiative to participate in planning sessions. Contributes ideas and resources to project. Actively listens to others and responds with helpful suggestions | |
| Content Relevancy | Delivers content not relative to assignment, or tangentially relevant. | Content marginally relevant, or a bad fit for the task assigned, requiring additional work by group. | Content precisely on point and germane to the task assigned. Content requires no rework to fit into project. | |
| Content Scope/Detail | Content more narrow or more broad in focus than required. In any case, of limited usefulness because of lack of organization. Content lacks enough detail to be useful, or includes details that detract from focus of assignment. | Content addresses most major points of assignment, but not all, Or content overlaps the assignments of others and requires reworking. Content is poorly organized. Content detail is uneven, or off-target. | Content concisely addresses all points of assigned task. Content logically and clearly organized. Content detail effectively communicates the focus of assignment comprehensively. Detail is valuable for effective decision-making. | |
| TOTAL | | | | _____ |