



THURSDAY 1:45 - 3:00

COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

Nina Reich, Loyola Marymount University

COMMUNICATION STUDIES DEPARTMENT

This project examines how community-based learning (CBL) courses can promote transformational learning. More specifically, my analysis addresses how CBL courses can move beyond service, and instead, offer strategies for designing and implementing CBL courses where service is a vehicle for social change. In order to analyze how community-based transformational learning can foster students' learning to attain a heightened consciousness about being an engaged citizen, to demonstrate an increased commitment to improving their community and the lives of others, and in seeing themselves as life-long agents of change, my research employs a qualitative thematic analysis. Sources of data include: pre-class and post-class open-ended inquiries asking students about their interest, experience and commitment to service and social change, student reflection papers, student journal reflection pieces, student dialogue from in-class guided reflections, qualitative assessment from students and community partners, and student teaching evaluations. Consequently, my project employs this analysis in order to address how CBL projects afford students and community partners, the opportunity to collaborate, in order to address underlying systemic issues that perpetuate societal inequities and the need for service in the first place.

SELECTING AND EVALUATING STUDENT ARTIFACTS AS EVIDENCE OF READINESS FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL

Brian Kokensparger, Creighton University

COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

As advisors, we must ensure that students learn how to make choices which best prepare them to reach their academic goals. Medical school admissions boards currently offer interview slots to academically-prepared students who have a high probability of having adequate non-cognitive skills as demonstrated through their resumes and personal statements. However, these highly-groomed instruments may exaggerate a student's true abilities, leading admissions boards to mistakenly offer interview slots to inferior candidates. This study will consider the collection, selection, and evaluation of undergraduate student artifacts as a means of assessing readiness for medical school in terms of non-cognitive skills. I am hoping to use qualitative analysis to find themes which give evidence to one or more of the Big 5 Personality Traits (Norman, 1963), which include Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience. This analysis will then help students prepare their applications with attention towards cognitive and non-cognitive evidence.



THURSDAY 1:45 - 3:00

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN BUSINESS SCHOOL EDUCATION

Teal McAteer, McMaster University

HUMAN RESOURCES & MANAGEMENT AREA, DEGROOTE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Transformative Learning “occurs when individuals change their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs and consciously making and implementing plans that bring out new ways of defining their worlds” (Mezirow, 1978). Such learning is often catalyzed by a “disorienting dilemma” (a life crisis or major transition) that compels one to see their world, their relationship, and/or their life in a different way. Surprisingly, Transformative Learning Theory has not significantly influenced the management education literature, however management educators and practitioners are increasingly pointing to the need for business programs to go beyond the transfer of pure intellectual knowledge and help students implement new ideas/thoughts and experiment with new behaviours (Kets de Vries, 2007). This 3-year longitudinal research is an attempt to demonstrate how strategic disorienting dilemmas can be used to elicit critical reflection and potential perspective transformation in a MBA classroom environment. Both quantitative and qualitative post TLE data has been collected over time from multiple groups of MBA students producing a sample to date of 160 participants. Descriptive analyses support positive and long term effects of integrating TLE into business education design and delivery.

LEARNING TO RESEARCH, LEARNING TO THINK

Elizabeth Watson, Rider University

DEPARTMENT OF GRADUATE EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP AND COUNSELING

I am studying the development of higher-order thinking by graduate students in the context of learning to do social research. In my teaching practice, I have noticed that when masters degree students learn to analyze qualitative data, they engage in complex thinking, the creation of new mental models and at times, transform their view of themselves as knowledge creators. Since my project is in its early stages, I am exploring the conceptual material that appears to inform what I am observing. Educational psychology, adult learning and cognitive science all seem to provide insights relevant to my inquiry. An intention I have for the institute is to refine my interdisciplinary conceptual model. A second intention is to discover or generate a means for evaluating the evolution of graduate students' higher-order thinking. I am particularly interested in discovering ways to assess based on student reflection.



THURSDAY 1:45 - 3:00

WHEN THE CAMPUS IS THE COMMUNITY: SHIFTING THE
IDEA OF 'SERVICE' IN SERVICE LEARNING

Stacy Grooters, Stonehill College

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
ENGLISH AND GENDER & SEXUALITY STUDIES

Community-Based Learning (CBL) and other “civic engagement” pedagogies often seek to transform students’ understanding of themselves and their communities by providing them opportunities to apply what they learn to projects completed in partnership with community organizations. However, such transformative experiences aren’t guaranteed: students’ attitudes about themselves and “the served” can be confirmed rather than challenged when they aren’t given the tools to think critically about the power dynamics of the service relationship. This project seeks to investigate whether CBL projects focused on campus transformation can disrupt assumptions about who serves and who is being served and so set the stage for more critical reflection on the nature of service. It builds on student attitude survey data and reflective essays gathered from two different CBL courses and will integrate follow-up interviews this summer. This qualitative data will be coded so as to identify shifts in students’ attitudes as well as how they identify the transformations in their thinking.

HOW TO MANAGE SUMMATIVE CAPSTONE EXPERIENCES TO
SUPPORT CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT LEARNING
AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Guy Gessner, Canisius College

ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS

The evidence sought for this research project focuses on plans, strategies and tactics for continuous improvement in student learning. It is expected that evidence will be found in the fields of Education, Communication, Business and Statistics from Psychology and Education. It is anticipated that research in the field of Education will provide factual evidence that improvements in student learning can be made using summative assessments and a planned approach. Communication should be able to provide insights on establishing effective feed-forward and feedback communications. The field of Business will be able to contribute frameworks for creating a continuous improvement process and environment. Finally, the field of Statistics will be able to supply ideas for constructing research and quasi-research designs and models that provide structure and are adaptive to accommodate learning over time. A structural model is being developed based upon the framework for experimental and quasi-experimental designs by Campbell and Stanley. To this framework, feedback and feed-forward communications are being added and adaptive models are being reviewed for possible inclusion to utilize what has been learned in a continuous improvement model.



THURSDAY 1:45 - 3:00

BEYOND THE ACADEMIC CULTURAL COMMUNITY: NAVIGATING
THE PEDAGOGY OF PROFESSIONALIZATION BETWEEN THE
ACADEMIC AND BUSINESS CONTEXTS

Smiljka Cubelic, Indiana University-South Bend

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Beyond the normative academic cultural community in rhetoric and composition, I continue to argue for an open intellectual climate which embraces a pedagogical space where academic theory and workplace practice interface successfully. This integration, however, requires a paradigm shift that can successfully navigate the pedagogical space between the academic and business contexts. Specifically, it highlights the widely perceived problem in professional writing – we teach mostly about being professional instead of how to become credible professionals. To address this problem, I employ the pedagogy of professionalization, an alternative pedagogy that responds directly to the learning-centered paradigm with emphasis on the student learning assessment and a clear articulation of the assessable goals. At this preliminary stage, I am using Introduction to Business Writing students' self-assessment of their performance in Individual and Collaborative Projects to demonstrate with evidence that - academic theory and workplace practice interface successfully, that student-learning paradigm successfully aligns pedagogy and curriculum, that student self-analysis supports curriculum.
