GLIMPSE THE INFINITE: LEARNING TO SEE, SEEING TO CREATE

Michael Palmer, University of Virginia

My research questions center around visual literacy, or the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in an image. Specifically, are the learning activities I’ve incorporated into my course helping students critically analyze visual content? In what ways exactly is students’ visual literacy improved? Including tailored end-of-course evaluation data, I have collected several pieces of textual evidence to help answer these questions. For example, I asked students to look at two different paintings—one at the start of the semester and one near the end—and to answer the following two questions: What do you see? and What do you think that means? I am analyzing this data by counting the number of observations made and categorizing the type and quality of the observations. Though I’ve not yet begun to address this, I’m also interested in learning whether an emphasis on visual literacy improves students’ creativity and creative products.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Dabney McKenzie, Troy University

In the “olden days” individuals apprenticed in chosen careers. Today, the same thing happens in the “practice” of law and medicine. It is how newly minted practitioners gain confidence and self-assuredness to take on the mantle of their chosen field. How can higher education faculty better structure their assessment system to more closely align it with real world practice? Graduate students in the 5th year Traditional Master’s program complete as many as five Teacher Work Samples. Using a 4-point Likert survey that addresses the basic constructs of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS), information is being gathered regarding the degree to which the TWS, in its multiple applications, is re-patterning the way teacher candidates think about teaching. To gather comparison data from other in-service teachers, this survey has been administered to the faculty in four additional elementary schools in our local school system.
Interactive SMART Boards are gaining popularity in our K-12 classrooms among teachers who want to involve students in learning with technology. The interactive quality of SMART Boards makes them more appealing than other presentation methods such as chalkboards or overhead projectors and screens. They enhance both teaching and learning experiences and support all learning styles and abilities. SMART Boards provide teachers with ability to share ideas with students and offer interactive learning experiences. With proper training, planning, and preparation, it is a powerful instructional tool. Placing pre-service teachers in classrooms with interactive technology offer opportunities to experience firsthand use of SMART technology for meaningful and authentic classroom activities. This research focuses on the impact of providing pre-service teachers access to interactive SMART technology and training them to learn to use SMART technology effectively in a Professional Development School.

SUSTAINABLE LEARNING IN TECHNOLOGY INTENSIVE PROGRAMS

Phillip Motley and Sang Nam, Elon University

Instruction in technically intensive programs requires teaching a wide array of technology to students alongside other important content. Complicating any viable pedagogy is the fact that the relevant technology is routinely updated, changed or replaced. Teachers in this environment often devote an inordinate amount of instructional time to technical content. Therefore, it appears critical that we design strategies for transferring significant portions of the technical instruction to locations and times external to the classroom thus allowing instructors to dedicate a larger portion of class time to other course content. Furthermore, long-term success for students in this field is predicated on their ability to adopt strategies for independently learning technology. Put simply, in academic disciplines heavily defined by transient content, instructors need to teach students to learn how to learn. Innovative—even disruptive—pedagogical thinking will be required in order to achieve the goals of this project.
ENHANCING CREATIVITY IN SCIENTIFIC THINKING

Gwendolyn Lawrie, University of Queensland
CHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOSCIENCES

Scientific thinking and cognitive apprenticeship teaching strategies are commonly applied throughout the chemistry curriculum and students often demonstrate high achievement through rehearsal of well established formats and models in assessment tasks (e.g., problem-solving exercises, laboratory reports and literature critiques). The introduction of active learning scenario tasks for large cohorts (>1000 students) has raised a question of whether the processes of collaboration, peer review, reflection and critical appraisal can enhance metacognition and synthesis of ideas. We are looking for evidence of triggers of higher order thinking and creativity in student learning as they collaboratively solve problems framed in interdisciplinary contexts. Quantitative and qualitative data has been gathered through questionnaires and focus groups. Emerging themes have been applied in the process of inductive coding (NVivo) and data is currently being analyzed to identify evidence of any factors, contexts or environments that promote the integration of ideas by an individual or a group.

VISUAL BRAINSTORMING: THINKING WITH VISUAL IMAGES

Lynne Porter, Fairfield University
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

In teaching design for the theatre, the challenge is to help students develop interesting design ideas. This visual brainstorming research centers on helping students understand how artists process and manipulate visual images, by extracting and combining ideas from the images. The goal is the creation of interesting design ideas, then developing the ideas into rich finished designs. Visual brainstorming is a series of classroom exercises. This process combines the basic tenets of brainstorming, with thinking with the eye and hand, using seeing/drawing/painting to develop a kernel of a design idea. More exercises need to be devised, but the preliminary evidence is exciting. Recent students’ resultant design ideas are markedly stronger than those of former students. Assessment criteria for good design ideas are in development, so the merit of the various exercises can be evaluated.
HOLDING THE CLASSROOM HOSTAGE: STUDYING THE EFFICACY OF A ROLE PLAY AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUE

Nancy Zarse, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

The central question is how to conduct research to assess student learning during an eight hour role play, which is the capstone for a graduate Hostage Negotiation course. The purpose is to explore the learning efficacy of the role play within the context of a simulated hostage negotiation scenario. The role play has been systematically studied over the past three years by gathering data, observations, and student feedback. Last year, pre- and post-measures in several contexts were collected. This year, a survey of skills was designed, because skills and confidence are enhanced via scenario-based training. Pre- and post-measures of skills and anxiety were administered; analysis of that data is not complete. A focus group will be conducted. Grounded theory is being used to make use of the emerging evidence. The goal is to develop a model for a high-impact experiential application that might inform other student learning opportunities.

TEACHING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: CARRYING POWERFUL IMAGES INTO PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Susan Klappa, Caroline Goulet, & Joy Doll, St. Catherine & Creighton Universities

Community engagement is a pedagogical tool used to raise awareness to real life issues faced by communities, challenging students to think more deeply about their role as participatory citizens. This pedagogical process involves preparation, action, reflection, and evaluation. Reflection often consists of students providing written summaries of their experiences yet the voice of the community is often missing. The use of media tools such as photo or video voice enhance the community’s participation in this process connecting social justice to policy change. The central question of this proposal is: how might the use of media such as photo montages and video voice enhance and deepen reflection creating a link to social responsibility? Listening with our heart or sitting in the true presence of the other through images of photographs and video provides access to new insight on social problems connecting social responsibility and social action for policy change.

FRIDAY 11:30 - 12:15