

PAES Instructional Enhancement Initiative

College of Education & Human Ecology, The Ohio State University

Spring Workshop: Faculty Teaching Tips—Set for May 16th



Important Dates for Spring

- April 13—Proposals due to Darcy for the PAES Collaboration in Instruction Award**
- May 16—Spring Workshop: Faculty Teaching Tips**
- May 18—Deadline for Spring issue of the Newsletter**
- June 4 — Eggheads & Eggrolls**

It's time to start thinking about the Spring Faculty Teaching Tips Workshop. It's an opportunity to share ideas and learn from your colleagues. Each presenter will have 10 minutes to give a brief overview of a "teaching tip" and entertain some questions and dialogue. Please think about sharing one of your teaching tips with your colleagues.

Other items already on the agenda: A overview of the project by the winners of the 2007 PAES Collaboration in Instruction Award; tips learned at the Lilly Conference on Teaching & Learning; and using a Tablet PC in the classroom. But, there's still room for more! Hope you'll share your ideas— and put the date on your calendar now!

Spring Workshop

**Wednesday, May 16
12:00-2:00
Location: TBA**

Lunch will be provided

Writing for the PAES Instructional Enhancement Newsletter can be a good career move...

In the autumn newsletter, Dr. Helen Malone wrote the feature article about "inter-teaching."

Dr. Malone and two graduate students in special education are now writing the results of her inter-teaching experience from autumn quarter into a manuscript to be submitted to a professional journal for publication. Congratulations, Helen!

Anyone interested in writing a newsletter article for the Spring Issue?



PAES Bookclub

Thanks to everyone who participated in the PAES bookclub —9 PAES faculty and Dr. Plank (FTAD) met 4 times to talk about Peter Filene & Ken Bain's *The Joy of Teaching*.
Bookclub participants:
Front row: Professors Konrad, Granello & Dollarhide
Back row: Professors Turner, Goodway, Malone, Plank, & Haag-Granello
Not pictured: Aulette, Hessler

Proposals due April 13 for PAES Collaboration in Instruction Award

The Third Annual PAES "Collaboration in Instruction Award" will be given during the spring quarter to members of the PAES faculty who demonstrate a collaborative effort in instruction (e.g., several faculty members, a program, a section). Attention will be given to how this collaborative effort enhances the academic plan and/or the mission of the college and school. The winners will receive \$1200 to purchase items to further enhance their instructional plans and will be asked to highlight their efforts in instruction at the PAES Spring Instructional Enhancement Workshop. Submissions are due April 13 —and should include a 3-5 page summary of the proposed project, including (a) an overview and description; (b) goals; (c) a description of how the project meets one or more components of the academic plan; (d) a plan for project evaluation, (e) a description of how the money will be spent, and (f) appendices as necessary to support the proposal. [Resubmissions are encouraged.](#)

Using Chats in the Classroom: Increasing Learner Voices to Build Shared Meaning

By David S. Stein, Associate Professor, & Constance E. Wanstreet, Doctoral Candidate, Workforce Development and Education

Online learning formats provide an opportunity for learners to share their experiences, negotiate meaning, and take ownership of subject matter knowledge through discussion. Given that discussion leading to shared understanding is an expectation in many online courses and given the ubiquitous nature of synchronous communication, such as instant messaging, among the upcoming generation of higher education students as well as the use of real-time communications in business and industry, a question arises concerning how synchronous learning spaces can contribute to critical thinking and the construction of shared understanding. Improved understanding of how shared meaning develops through sustained communication may help instructors design and facilitate real-time discussions that lead to higher-order thinking in online inquiry-based environments.

There is a growing body of literature investigating how learners use synchronous communication tools and the different ways students respond online in synchronous as compared to asynchronous learning designs. Asynchronous communication is thought to encourage more time on task, while synchronous forms of communication seem to generate higher levels of social and community-building responses (Bober & Dennen, 2001; Chou, 2000; Hrastinski, 2006; Hines & Pearl, 2004). Yet chats seem to encourage more soliciting of ideas, responses, and information as compared to statements posted only on a discussion board. In addition, chats are useful as a medium for giving and receiving advice on specific aspects of course work, providing a sense of being in a class, and having a shared learning experience. Through real-time chats, students may feel less distant from other learners and more confident in their class performance.

If our goal is to promote higher levels of critical thinking and to encourage self-direction among our learners, the question remains as to how students negotiate through the chat in order to arrive at shared understanding. The distance education research group in WDE has been investigating the Community of Inquiry model (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, (2001) to highlight processes learners use to make the chat room a tool for constructing knowledge.

Chat in a Community of Inquiry

The Community of Inquiry model is a triadic, inquiry-based course design composed of teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence (Garrison et al., 2001). It provides instructors with insights concerning how learners construct meaning through sustained discussion and reflection (Garrison et al.). Higher-order thinking is a product of cognitive presence, which has four phases: triggering events,

exploration, integration, and resolution. Social presence and teaching presence support the development of cognitive presence. Social presence engages participants in an educational experience by creating enjoyable group interactions and personally fulfilling learning activities (Rourke, Anderson, Garrison, & Archer, 2001). Teaching presence accounts for the design and facilitation of educational experiences that tie social and cognitive presence together to achieve learner outcomes (Anderson, Rourke, Archer, & Garrison, 2001).

So how does shared understanding develop? Stein, et al. (in press) suggest that learners work through a natural dialogic process in which all three presences are present for shared understanding to emerge. There is a pattern among group members that involves acquainting themselves through social presence and orienting themselves to the cognitive task through teaching presence. Meaning making may begin with a triggering event or series of exploratory statements. As members see the text on the screen and respond to it through questioning and collective exploration, a transition to shared understanding begins.

Collective understanding of an issue requires dialogue that helps group members understand various perspectives deeply. For that reason, the majority of statements in a chat are exploratory, followed by integration, and finally resolution. Tentative solutions in the integration phase usually are not accepted automatically in an effort to resolve the issue. Instead, solutions may be followed by exploratory statements or triggering events, indicating the testing of solutions in the context of each learner's experience and personal meaning. Resolution comes near the end of a chat and may be followed by indications of social presence, often compliments or expressions of agreement. Shared understanding involves exploring difficult issues thoroughly and synthesizing group members' diverse perspectives. Shared understanding starts with personal meaning and moves to collective learning, which comes about from the interaction between a learner's personal meaning and the group's collaboration on an issue.

Recommendations for Practice

Instructors should be aware that learners in a chat room follow a process in order to reach shared understanding. The pattern might begin with group members exhibiting social presence by acquainting themselves and using teaching presence to orient themselves to the learning task. Social and teaching presence seem to be necessary preludes to the work of meaning making. Instructors should encourage social presence comments and communicate prior to the chat their expectations for the chat; i.e., the outcomes. Given a clearly defined outcome, learners will set chat norms and procedures for moving the chat toward resolution.

Using Chats in the Classroom, Continued

Academic chat is not the same as casual chat, such as instant messaging. Instructors might provide an orientation to chat discussions. Instructors might provide guidance on how to use triggering, exploratory, integrative, and resolving statements to maximize learning in a chat environment.

Instructors might monitor chats, not to interfere in the meaning-making aspects of the chat, but to provide feedback on more efficient use of cognitive presence indicators leading to critical thinking and resolution. While social and teaching presence statements are necessary, too many such statements detract from the meaning-making process. In the absence of feedback, learners in the chat room will allocate their time in social, teaching, and cognitive presence in a similar way from chat to chat. Over time, learners do not seem to change strategy for achieving resolution, nor do learners change the pattern of how they allocated their chat time.

An instructor does not need to regulate the chat when questions for discussion are ill-defined but the goal of a discussion posting is clearly defined. Learners use elements of teaching presence to structure their learning. Group members established norms that mitigated against disjointed thoughts and inconsiderate treatment of one another.

An instructor can improve the cognitive presence of a chat by providing specific opening statements for students to use as a means of encouraging higher-order thinking, such as requesting evidence for a given position.

When used in the context of a community of inquiry, learner-moderated chats lead to the space in which cognitive presence develops. Chats provide a more casual, immediate environment than asynchronous discussion boards. Chats give learners the opportunity to transform their personal meaning into shared solutions through a nonlinear process of asking questions, exchanging information, connecting ideas, and defending solutions.

Chats provide a space in which to explore the multidimensional nature of an issue in an informal way. At an individual level, chat technology gives learners the ability to reflect on their thoughts as they type them in the message entry area. Based on the direction of the conversation, learners are able to make revisions before they send their comments. In addition, the group as a whole has the ability to see the progression of logic and higher-order thinking as the text unfolds on the members' computer screens and is revised, amplified, and integrated into shared understanding through feedback. Such a pattern can operate in the absence of direct instructor presence as learners negotiate through chats to resolve ill-defined problems.

For further reading:

- Anderson, T., Rourke, L., Archer, W., & Garrison, R. (2001). Assessing teaching presence in computer conferencing transcripts. *The Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 5(2). Retrieved December 15, 2005, from http://www.aln.org/publications/jaln/v5n2/v5n2_anderson
- Bober, M. J., & Dennen, V. P. (2001). Intersubjectivity: Facilitating knowledge construction in online environments. *Educational Media International*, 38(4), 241-250.
- Chou, C. C. (2000). Patterns of Learner-Learner Interaction in Distance Learning Networks. In J. Bourdeau & R. Heller (Eds.), *Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications 2000* (pp. 207-212). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.
- Garrison, R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2001). Critical thinking and computer conferencing: A model and tool to assess cognitive presence. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 15(1), 7-23.
- Hines, R. A., & Pearl, C. E., (2004). Increasing interaction in Web-based instruction: Using synchronous chats and asynchronous discussions. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 23(2), 33-36.
- Hrastinski, S. (2006). The relationship between adopting a synchronous medium and participation in online group work: An explorative study. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 14(2), 137-152.
- Rourke, L., Anderson, T., Garrison, R., & Archer, W. (2001). Assessing social presence in asynchronous text-based, computer conferencing. *Journal of Distance Education*, 14(3), 51-70.
- Stein, D. S., Wanstreet, C. E., Glazer, H. R., Engle, C. L., Harris, R. A., Johnston, S. M., Simons, M. R., & Trinko, L. A. (in press). Creating Shared Understanding through Chats in a Community of Inquiry.

Don't forget the PAES Diversity Statement in your spring syllabi

The School of PAES is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the School seeks to develop and nurture diversity, believing that it strengthens the organization, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. The School of PAES prohibits discrimination against any member of the school's community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability status, health status, or veteran status.



College of Education & Human Ecology, The Ohio

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PAES TEACHING INITIATIVE WEBSITE:

WWW.EDUCATION.OSU.EDU/PAES

THEN, LOOK UNDER "INSTRUCTIONAL ENHANCEMENT"

Diversity Update: Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Minority Students

By Desiree Vega and Antoinette Miranda

Strategies for the recruitment of minority students include outreach and awareness programs directed where these students are located, such as career day, college fairs, and graduate school fairs (Donnell, Edwards, & Green, 2002). Minority students are often attracted to campuses where there is a visible minority student body, so encouraging other minority students to assist at outreach events can be beneficial. Other forms of recruitment also include targeting campus minority organizations, religious groups, minority fraternities and sororities, as well as minority mailing lists (Lowenstein, 1997). Colleges can also make their school visible through advertising in minority oriented newsletters and mailings.

Early interventions programs that target minority students in middle school and high school, and prepare students academically by providing tutoring, counseling and mentoring also are effective recruitment strategies to increase minority enrollment (Diversity Pipeline, 2002). Programs such as summer research and bridge programs often stimulate interest in higher education at an early age. Alternative admissions criteria can also increase minority enrollment; admissions tests such as the SAT and GRE are often inadequate measures of academic success among

minority students in college or graduate school. Other admissions criteria such as interviews, letters of recommendations, writing samples, grade point average, and research experiences among are suggested as better criteria of academic success of ethnically diverse students (Lee, 1991; Sampson & Boyer, 2001).

There is a high drop-out rate among minority college students, especially in the first year (Hurd, 2000; Prime, 2001). Some factors at the root of the low retention and graduation rates appear to be the result of academic unpreparedness, financial difficulties, lack of culturally diverse faculty and students, and a lack of adequate social and academic support (Priest & McPhee, 2000; Lee, 1991; Dumas-Hines, 2001).

Strategies to enhance retention among students of color include providing academic advisors who are committed to working with minority students. Often times minority students are afraid to seek help, so academic and faculty advisors need to be committed to following up with students and monitoring their progress (Hurd, 2000). Financial aid is another significant factor. Providing students with financial aid packages, scholarships, grants and other resources can improve retention rates. The presence of diverse faculty creates a minority friendly campus climate

and reduces student alienation and isolation. Workshops for students and faculty can encourage an appreciation for diversity, and social and cultural organizations such as the Black Graduate and Professional Student Caucus, Hispanic Graduate Organization, and Asian American Association, allow students to become active and involved in their culture. Mentoring programs also have been effective (Holloway, 2002).

According to the *Minorities in Higher Education Twenty-second Annual Status Report* (2006), total minority enrollment in the nation's colleges and universities rose by 50.7 percent to 4.7 million students between 1993 and 2003. However, there is still a gap between minority and White students.

The PAES Diversity Initiative is specifically working on strategies that will be made available to faculty to assist their efforts in attracting minority students into their programs. If your program is interested in bringing minority candidates to campus to visit and is seeking financial assistance, please feel free to contact me at Miranda.2@osu.edu. We have some limited funds that could assist you in this endeavor. More information will be forthcoming at the next PAES faculty meeting.