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Breaking Barriers in Teaching and Learning

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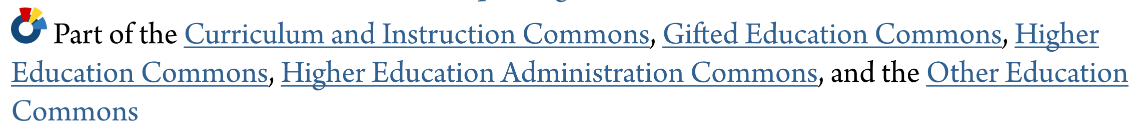
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BREAKING BARRIERS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

James Ford AND
John Zubizarreta, EDITORS

BREAKING BARRIERS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

BREAKING BARRIERS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

National Collegiate Honors Council
Teaching and Learning Monograph III

Edited by James Ford
and John Zubizarreta

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FOREWORD

Richard Badenhausen
Westminster College

When I first stumbled upon honors education over two decades ago while team-teaching a seminar called "Poetry and the Condition of Music," it was the freedom inside and outside the classroom that most caught my attention. Sprung from the shackles of my usual British Literature survey, one in which students trudged through a rigid chronology of canonical authors, I was free to design a course with the university's choral director that put ancient oral poets in dialogue with rap musicians; that explored the collaboration between W. H. Auden and Benjamin Britten; that set Langston Hughes against crucial jazz influences. Additionally, as someone who was (and is!) deeply resistant to authority in any form, I loved the idea of turning over control of a classroom discussion to students: doing so with a partner in team-teaching arrangements encouraged us to step off the teaching stage and clear space for the talented undergraduates in the seminar.

While I had learned an immense amount in graduate school and was often mentored by deeply caring professors, I also found many of those learning spaces propped up by what bell hooks refers to as "the unjust exercise of power" (5). It was clear who was in charge in those classrooms, and most graduate students quickly discovered that the clearest route to success traveled through submitting to longstanding hierarchies. Virtually all conversations were routed through our professors rather than peer to peer; when we did find ourselves leading our own undergraduate classes, we tended to mimic that teacher-centric behavior. As Michel Foucault has shown, traditional education like this can be understood as a process of training that uses practices like hierarchical observation, normalizing judgments, and disciplining examination to reinforce power relations between teacher and student, between subject and

object (170–94). The power imbedded in such relationships is so seductive, in fact, that even after escaping such subjugation, the previous targets of power tend to mimic those hierarchies with themselves installed as masters, a depressing irony observed by Paolo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

One of the crucial moves of honors education over the past few decades has been to attack such hierarchies from within, to place students at the center of a project that turns ownership of the learning process over to learners and out of the hands of teachers. In Freirean terms, this means allowing students to "participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation" (48). This current volume is explicitly asking—through its title and contents—what such a transformation looks like, and it provides expert guidance to those animated by practices that lead down this exciting path. *Breaking Barriers in Teaching and Learning* thus paints a picture of honors education as innovative, student-centered, and progressive, filled with "liberatory practice[s]" (59), to cite hooks's rich phrase, that ultimately live up to her call for the classroom to be "the most radical space of possibility in the academy" (12). These essays demonstrate how honors teaching and learning can be truly transformative and why that matters in this day and age of outrageous public misrepresentations of what actually happens in our most progressive and engaged college classrooms.

It is remarkable, too, that the act of putting learners in charge of their learning is still a transgressive act. Always a deeply conservative institution, higher education is still dominated by teacher-centered strategies that tend to emphasize "right" answer type thinking among students. Thankfully, genuine honors education has always been about focusing on the process of learning in the belief that such an orientation will actually lead to better outcomes on the product side.

While honors has also often led the way in higher education, we are perhaps not the best marketers of our merchandise. For example, today's much ballyhooed high-impact practices—learner-centered classroom environments, experiential learning, interdisciplinary curriculums, place-based learning, and metacognitive assignments,

to name just a few—have been central to honors for more than half a century, though that genealogy is rarely highlighted. In some respects, a volume like this shows that the honors community is engaging and must engage in the hard work of advocating for the importance of what we do.

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INTRODUCTION

At times, when honors education comes up in academic or popular conversations, a common and automatic response seems to prevail: an assumption that honors means faster, broader, more complicated, and more expert delivery of content information on the part of the teacher and greater, more efficient acquisition of disciplinary knowledge and higher achievement on tests or essays on the part of the student. What the instructor teaches in terms of countable amounts of information and what the student produces in terms of quantitatively measurable outcomes rule the day.

For those of us who have long dedicated our teaching and scholarly careers to honors, such hegemonic assumptions are problematic barriers that run counter to what we often espouse as philosophy and practice in our honors work, and they are worth challenging. For us, content knowledge and learning outcomes are certainly important and unavoidably necessary in today's higher education climate of auditive assessments, "outputs," and "returns on investment." But the most transformative value of our dedication to honors depends equally on *what* we teach, complemented by *how* and *why* we teach in a way that challenges students to learn in deep, meaningful, connected, and lasting ways. In other words, process is our game, playing just as crucial a role in stepping up students' learning as delivery of fundamental knowledge and skills. Never a community to accept false dichotomies, honors people understand that process and product are interdependent. Yet, honors is about taking risks in pedagogical approaches, course design, and curricular programming to bridge process and outcomes. Honors inspires us to think about how to teach more actively to make a real difference in student learning. Honors helps us better understand how and why students learn more significantly when we engage them in not only remembering content information but also learning how to learn differently in creative, integrative,

interdisciplinary ways. Honors is about breaking perceived barriers in teaching and learning.

The Teaching and Learning Committee of the National Collegiate Honors Council has long recognized that the fundamental mission of honors education centers on the power of excellence in teaching and learning in all our endeavors inside and outside the classroom. What we deem as vital dimensions of the honors enterprise—both philosophical and practical—should be the imperatives that drive all our teaching, all our courses and programs, all of our students' learning experiences. We have often heard the fair question, "If what we do in honors is so enriching and effective, why aren't we doing it in all our educational efforts?" Indeed. While numerous factors exist that require differentiation in our schools and that make the individuation of diverse students a positive approach to educating our societies inclusively, we agree that honors has much to contribute to our larger community of teachers and learners. We believe that the essays in this volume have wider application beyond the honors classroom or program, and we hope that readers—within and outside of honors—will adapt and use the various ideas, practical approaches, experiences, and models shared in the various chapters. We hope that the front-cover image of Matisse's 1916 painting *The Piano Lesson* will inspire us to reflect on how the incalculable influence of the instructor-mentor stems not from barriers of superior knowledge or constructions of power but from patience, caring, high expectations, appreciation for diverse talents, expert guidance, and love of teaching and learning in honors and beyond.

Breaking Barriers

The first section, "Breaking Barriers with Significant Student Learning," explores several specific techniques teachers can apply to almost any course. In the first chapter, retired faculty development director Barbara J. Millis articulates a model of questioning in which students generate and then discuss their own questions. She also describes three creative ways for implementing those student-generated questions. Leslie G. Kaplan of the University of North Florida builds on Millis's insights by reviewing the literature

on innovative discussion-based practices before describing several innovations of her own. Susan E. Dinan of Pace University offers an analysis of two distinct approaches to linked classes and learning communities, both of which enrich the first-semester experience of students in valuable ways. In the final chapter of this section, Dahliani Reynolds, Meg Case, and Becky Spritz return to the classroom to show how linked classes at Roger Williams University not only create unique opportunities for engaged student learning but also help an honors program create its own identity.

"Breaking Barriers with Faculty Development and Teaching Excellence," the second section, details a number of methods for enhancing teaching through faculty development. It begins with Hanne ten Berge and Rob van der Vaart of Utrecht University in The Netherlands and their account of a professional development course about honors teaching. They argue persuasively that the same principles that guide teaching and learning in honors classes—principles such as academic challenge, the importance of learning communities, and substantial freedom for students—should guide faculty development courses. Evidence from three such courses at Utrecht University supports their arguments. In a similar vein, Milton D. Cox of Miami University describes the power that faculty learning communities (FLCs) have for transforming faculty and their teaching. Such a community is both an ideal way to bring new faculty into honors education and an excellent approach for existing honors faculty to refine their own methods and courses. In Chapter Seven, Columbia College's John Zubizarreta, a Carnegie Foundation/CASE U.S. Professor of the Year, demonstrates the value of the honors professional development portfolio for documenting accomplishments and meeting the goals of tenure and promotion. The greatest value of such a portfolio, however, is its capacity for facilitating deep reflection and collaboration in faculty development.

Presumably most faculty want to be better teachers, but how do we know which practices are truly effective? Todd D. Zakrajsek of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Janina Tosic of the University of Applied Sciences Niederrhein, Krefeld, Germany,

offer several metacognitive strategies to help identify such practices, dispelling several myths about teaching and learning along the way. Replacing those myths with evidence-based educational practices will make us all better teachers and learners.

The third section, "Course Designs and Case Studies in Honors Teaching," highlights a variety of different classes and approaches to great teaching. While these case studies all emerge from an honors environment, the lessons learned apply to all sorts of courses. The University of South Alabama's Annmarie Guzy presents a useful model for a composition course, with a roadmap for how such a course can support a research-based curriculum. Matthew Carey Jordan analyzes two courses designed to build community at Auburn University at Montgomery, one that combines multiple honors seminars into a new and larger course and another that uses cultural experiences, service learning, or a book-of-the-month club in order to provide students maximum flexibility. In both cases, thinking differently about what honors should be enables a teacher to make the most of existing resources. In Chapter Eleven, Ken R. Mulliken of Southern Oregon University describes a U.S. history course, "Perspectives on Twentieth-Century American Identity." Its unique assignments and creative approach could be the basis for a number of interesting courses in different disciplines, not just American history. Finally, in Chapter Twelve, Rogers State University's James Ford develops three different approaches to varying the classroom experience. Taken together, these examples and techniques suggest the many ways that transformative teaching and learning can break barriers in education.

All of the contributions to this volume inspire us to retool the ways in which we teach and create curriculum and to rethink our assumptions about learning. Collectively, they challenge us to deconstruct perceptions that just because we teach, students learn; that our disciplinary training makes us automatically effective teachers; that rigor is a function of amount and difficulty of work rather than complexity and integration of work; and that students learn in uniform ways. Responding to the challenges presented directly or indirectly by the contents of our volume requires that

we remain open to breaking barriers that prevent us from achieving the highest goals of honors education. Breaking free of barriers allows us to use our new skills, our adjusted ways of thinking about teaching and learning, and our new freedoms to innovate as starting points for enhancing the learning of our honors students and, by extension, all our students.

John Zubizarreta and James Ford
1 September 2018

BREAKING BARRIERS IN
TEACHING AND LEARNING

BREAKING BARRIERS WITH
SIGNIFICANT STUDENT LEARNING

CHAPTER ONE

Using Student-Generated Questions to Promote Learning

Barbara J. Millis
Retired, University of Texas at San Antonio

Faculty who teach gifted honors students often ask themselves, "How can I ask questions that foster higher-order thinking?" "How can I get more students to respond?" "How can I ensure that students are learning from question-based discussions?" Another key concern: "How can I get students to begin interacting with each other rather than conducting a discussion much like a ping-pong match where the rapid exchanges occur only between a single student and me and then another student and me?" This last question can lead faculty to a different model of questioning, one in which students generate questions that are then used in creative, interactive ways to provoke meaningful discussions, usually in pairs or small groups.

THE VALUE OF ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS

In their book on using simulations to improve student learning, John P. Hertel and Barbara J. Millis recount the following anecdote:

> Isadore Rabbi, a Nobel-prize winning physicist, tells a story of when he was growing up in the Jewish ghetto of New York. When the children came home from school, their mothers would often ask them, "What did you learn in school today?" But Isadore's mother would ask him, "What good questions did you ask today?" Dr. Rabbi suggests he became a physicist and won the Nobel Prize because he was valued more for the questions he was asking than the answers he was giving. (71–72)

Ken Bain, in a 2008 keynote address, emphasized that students are not "grabbed" by the sometimes arcane questions of their professors; instead, they are intrigued by questions that interest them. The best teachers, he notes, have the ability to begin with questions that students already have on their minds and then move to questions important to the course. As an example, a professor who was teaching in the fall of 2006 had an overarching course question: "What impact did Reconstruction after the Civil War have on [subsequent] political developments and policies?" The question she used to hook students was, "What in the world happened with Katrina?" A follow-up question was, "When did the disaster in New Orleans begin?" To the students' surprise, the answer was 1866.

If questions are indeed so valuable, it seems strange that faculty members focus so much on their own question-generating abilities (important skills, certainly) and so little on students' skill levels in this regard. A quick review of the research and best practice books and articles in higher education show that they almost invariably address questioning techniques solely from the faculty perspective. According to Maryellen Weimer, for faculty members to use the more learning-centered approach that honors students need, they can try to involve students in creating—and answering—effective questions.

A USEFUL TOOL TO GENERATE QUESTIONS

Too often when faculty members expect students to submit questions, they offer little or no guidance. Thus, even advanced honors students typically create only "What"-based questions. A far more effective approach rests in using question stems developed and researched by Alison King ("Enhancing," "Guided," and "Promoting"), based on the 1956 version of Bloom's Taxonomy. (See Appendix 1 for numerous examples of useful question stems.) They work in face-to-face, hybrid, and online settings, usually "front-loaded" as out-of-class homework to produce deep learning, as described in an earlier publication (Millis). To simplify the grading process, the resulting questions can be a pass-fail homework assignment with points assigned for each viable question. In addition to making the grading decisions easier, this approach helps faculty determine that students have actually read the assigned materials and are coming to class prepared. (After all, even honors students are not always motivated to keep up with all the work!)

Students use a set of generic question stems or prompts as a guide for formulating their own specific questions about the content material. The list contains some questions more appropriate and challenging to dualistic thinkers, such as "What is the difference between ___ and ___?" Other questions challenge more advanced thinkers, such as "What are the strengths and weaknesses of ___?" The stems prompt all students to think beyond the obvious "What is" questions that students—even honors students—tend to create if left without guidance.

The first time instructors use this approach, they should provide specific examples to help students understand the process of generating effective questions. They can give their honors students, for example, sample questions in their discipline that are based on the stems. I challenged myself to use every single one of these stems to create questions about William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily." To my amazement and delight, I succeeded, managing to come up with questions I had never thought to ask before; thus, the stems can also be a useful tool for faculty members. I shared these questions with

students, knowing that I would be challenging them to write similar questions on the next work of literature.

Instructors should tell students that they do not need to know the answers to the questions they formulate: their purpose is to generate discussion. This caveat usually results in authentic questions, not meaningless ones for which students already hold canned responses. It also encourages honors students to identify relevant concepts, to elaborate on those ideas in their minds, and to think about how the ideas connect to each other and to their own prior knowledge and experiences, key facets of an authentic honors education.

The students can put these questions to use in a number of interactive ways. I encourage faculty members to think about creative ways to use these questions rather than simply offering them for whole-class discussion. Three specific ways to use them—all with online and large-class applications—are (1) Guided Reciprocal Peer Discussion; (2) Game-based Questions, with a focus on "Go Fish"; and (3) Question Shuffles. All three are discussed below.

GUIDED RECIPROCAL PEER DISCUSSION

Based on suggestions by Alison King, I have used this approach in face-to-face interactive discussions within small groups (Millis). It can also be adopted for online use through course management systems that allow faculty members to set up different iterations and variations of small groups, an essential option not available in earlier versions of some systems. For discussion purposes, I will use the face-to-face model.

All honors students do the assigned reading and bring to class a specified number of questions based on King's question stems. Faculty assign students to small discussion teams, with four to five students in each. As a structure nut, I like to assign specific roles so that students are not left floundering without clear guidance (structure is, according to James L. Cooper, an essential element of effective group work and cooperative learning). For a Guided Reciprocal Peer Discussion, faculty need to identify at least three key roles: Team Discussion Leader, Recorder, and Reporter. In a

face-to-face setting, a Time-Keeper could play a fourth role. I use playing cards (suit symbols and numbers) to identify the roles, but faculty can simply have students number off (1, 2, 3, 4) within the groups so that they can then assign roles to each group member based on the number. Instructors can ask honors students to send the questions to them ahead of time for vetting and for points, if that is a realistic option, particularly if they are using a classroom management system where such submissions are relatively easy.

During class, the Team Discussion Leader is responsible for seeing that all team members pose a question they want discussed, with the stipulation that the questions are based on different question stems. This practice ensures variety and different levels of thinking based on Bloom's Taxonomy. To promote reflective discussion, the questions should not have a single right answer. The Team Discussion Leader encourages equitable participation both in the discussion and in the questions shared, keeping the team focused on an in-depth discussion.

The Recorder captures the gist of each discussion. These notes reinforce the learning and allow for a final synthesis activity. As the final sequenced activity, the team reviews the discussion notes, and the honors students identify the discussion question that produced the most learning or the greatest insights, reinforcing the principles of collaboration and deep learning that are key in honors pedagogy.

The Reporter, working from the Recorder's notes, prepares a synthesis that includes the question and the most salient points made during the discussion. In a small face-to-face class, each group gives a 3–5 minute report of these insights. In an online application, collapsing the Recorder/Reporter roles may make sense. The responsible student posts the final synthesis of the group's best discussion. In large face-to-face classes, teachers can randomly call on students to give the report from their group, producing a small sample of reports. If teams submit the reports electronically, then they can be shared in other ways.

GAME-BASED QUESTIONS FOCUSED ON "GO FISH"

Experienced faculty who relish novelty and risk-taking can use the King question stems for academic games such as "Go Fish" or Bingo (Millis). I use "Go Fish" in my literature classes. The game evolved from a department mandate at a former institution that all English teachers must use literary quotations as a part of their final exams. After reading a quotation, students provide the author, the work of literature, and the person who is speaking. Many students, however, regard some quotations as "picky" or "tricky," and they end up guessing and scrambling for points if they do not recognize them. Aberrations then result, such as identifying "To be or not to be" in *A Farewell to Arms* by Toni Morrison or Emily Dickinson.

Recognizing necessity, I decided to make lemonade from lemons and convert the quotation requirement into a genuine learning experience by playing "Go Fish" as a prelude to the exam. "Go Fish," a children's card game, requires matching four like items (usually numbers in a deck of cards, such as four Aces or four Threes), so it was perfect for this four-part quotation requirement.

On a simple website, students submitted for pass/fail points the quotation, the work it came from, the author of the work, and the speaker. To enhance learning, I added a fifth part, a brief paragraph explaining the significance of the submitted quotation and how it relates to or illuminates the theme of the piece of literature. Using the forum feature of a course management system for the submissions also allows for peer critique. I returned to students without credit any incomplete, inaccurate, or inappropriate submissions. Because I also returned any duplicate quotations, the honors students had to read through the prior submissions before posting, a ploy that reinforced learning. The submission process was ongoing throughout the semester, resulting in rich quotations for virtually every work of literature we read.

Setting up the game required a fair amount of work on my part, which could be reduced with a more sophisticated website that would automatically format the four parts of the quotations. I cut and pasted the four parts (quotation/work/author/speaker) four-to-a-page, and then printed them on card stock. I clipped apart each

quadrant to form large playing cards, which I assembled into a pack of thirteen sets, like a deck of cards. I then dropped fifty-two "quotation cards" in the thirteen sets into large resealable plastic bags to form decks. In each deck, I was careful to balance quotations from different works. Because this exercise was a semester-long project, I ended up with multiple decks of quotation cards, making the game a viable option even for large classes.

As preparation for play, all students had access to all the quotations/works/authors/speakers, plus the paragraph on the quotation's significance. I renamed the game "Fishing for Quotations." Besides their own intrinsic motivation, honor students had two incentives to study: preparation for the pending game and knowing that some of these quotations would appear on their final exam.

On the day of play, I divided the students into teams of four and distributed the rules of play, requiring students to share the significance of the quotation with the other team members as they lay down each set of four. (Appendix 2 includes step-by-step instructions for the game.) Play was lively and energetic with plenty of grins after successful gains and many groans as students lost cards. When teams successfully completed the game, I handed them another bag with another deck containing different quotations, and play continued until class ended.

Students rated "Fishing for Quotations" very high on my end-of-class survey, and—best of all!—every student "maxed out" the mandated quotation section on the final exam. As a teacher, I felt good that I had turned a potential "nit-picky" department requirement into a genuine learning experience for my motivated and willing honors students.

Faculty members in other disciplines—particularly ones such as biology, geology, chemistry, math, business, or other content-heavy STEM-related areas—can develop their own versions of "Go Fish" with groups of four as an interactive and creative alternative to traditional lecturing in order to make their classes fit honors pedagogical aims.

QUESTION SHUFFLE

The "Question Shuffle" is ideal for faculty members who require short-answer or essay questions on their exams. The "Question Shuffle" gives students practice in writing short answer/essay responses, similar to those coming up on exams. Once again, the honors students formulate and submit questions after reviewing the materials for the upcoming exam. Each student writes two effective essay questions on an index card. Faculty can coach students on this process and share with them some good questions from prior exams.

On the practice day, the faculty member pairs the students. Each pair reviews the four questions available (two from each) and discusses which two questions are the best of the four. They then re-write those questions on another blank index card. The index cards are then "shuffled" around the room, so that each pair ends up with two questions from another pair. Each pair then discusses the options and decides which of the two is a better question. These decisions occur quickly, so within five minutes of coming to class, each pair is now ready to write answers to carefully vetted questions that have gone through three layers of screening. The screening, of course, is itself a useful process because it leads students to evaluation skills, the highest level of the earlier version of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Both members of the pair write an answer/essay on the selected question in the same amount of time they will have during the final exam. After the teacher calls "time," students read their partner's response, discussing afterwards the relative quality of the two answers and how they might combine them to form a stronger answer. This important step gives honors students an opportunity to see how another student approached the same challenge. Stephen D. Brookfield and others have emphasized that critical thinking depends on identifying and challenging assumptions and subsequently exploring and conceptualizing alternatives. This exchange and the subsequent discussion often lead to "aha" moments when students see different perspectives.

Students can then follow a similar process to answer as many questions, followed by paired discussion, as time permits. Because the "Question Shuffle" has pairs working together with no grading involved, the approach is highly effective in large classes. It is especially useful in promoting learning over grades, a common concern in teaching anxious and task-oriented honors students.

The benefits of a "Question Shuffle" are enormous. Honors students gain expertise in generating and evaluating good questions; they have an opportunity to practice skills under conditions similar to the testing situation; they receive feedback (assessment) from a peer on their efforts; and they often benefit from seeing another perspective on the same topic. Teachers also benefit from the "Question Shuffle." They gain insights into their students' levels of learning prior to an examination, and they have at their disposal a large bank of test questions with possible answers. Most faculty use as many viable student-generated questions as possible on the actual exam.

QUESTIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND HONORS

These three approaches to student-generated questions add novelty to the honors classroom. They also enhance learning through interactive, engaging pedagogical strategies consistent with the characteristics of honors education. James R. Davis emphasizes the value of the questioning process: "Thinking involves asking questions—sometimes new questions about old questions in the search for new answers" (234). Questioning, clearly, is at the core of honors teaching and learning, and the suggestions in this essay can help us lead better discussions in our honors and other courses.

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APPENDIX 1

Guiding Critical Thinking

Generic Questions	Specific Thinking Processes Induced
Explain why ____. (Explain how ____.)	analysis
What would happen if ____?	prediction / hypothesizing
What is the nature of ____?	analysis
What are the strengths and weaknesses of ____?	analysis / inferencing
What is the difference between ____ and ____?	comparison-contrast
Why is ____ happening?	analysis / inferencing
What is a new example of ____?	application
How could ____ be used to ____?	application
What are the implications of ____?	analysis / inferencing
What is ____ analogous to?	identification / creation of analogies and metaphors
How does ____ affect ____?	analysis of relationship (cause-effect)
How does ____ tie in with what we learned before?	activation of prior knowledge
Why is ____ important?	analysis of significance
How are ____ and ____ similar?	comparison-contrast
How does ____ apply to everyday life?	application—to the real world
What is a counter-argument for ____?	rebuttal to argument
What is the best ____, and why?	evaluation and provision of evidence
What is the solution to the problem of ____?	synthesis of ideas
Compare ____ and ____ with regard to ____.	comparison-contrast and evaluation based on criteria
What do you think causes ____? Why?	analysis of relationship (cause-effect)
Do you agree or disagree with this statement: ____? What evidence is there to support your answer?	evaluation and provision of evidence
What is another way to look at ____?	taking other perspectives

What does ____ mean?	comprehension
Describe ____ in your own words.	comprehension
Summarize ____ in your own words.	comprehension

Adapted from King, “Enhancing,” “Guided,” and “Promoting.”

APPENDIX 2

Fishing for Quotations

Game Rules (similar to the card game "Go Fish")

- The goal of the game is to collect sets of four cards in which one card is the quotation, one the literary work, one the author, and one the speaker.
- Students should be in groups of three or four with one deck of cards for each group.
- The dealer deals four cards to each student. The remaining cards go into a pile in the middle of the table (face down).
- One player starts by selecting another player and requesting a specific card. For example, Player 1 says to Player 3: "Do you have an "Author, Toni Morrison" card?
- If the player has the requested card, he or she relinquishes the card to the player who requested it. If not, the player who was asked for the card responds "Go Fish." The player who asked for the card then takes the top card from the pile in the center of the table.
- If a player obtains a complete set of four cards, he or she may place those cards face-up on the table, but may do this only during one's turn. He or she MUST explain to fellow players the significance of the quotation, tying it into themes, characterization, etc. Whenever a set of four cards is placed on the table, the other players should check the cards and challenge erroneous sets. If a set of cards is found to be erroneous, the player who placed the cards on the table must put the cards back into his or her hand.
- No discarding takes place.
- Play proceeds in this fashion around the table.
- The game is over when all players are out of cards.
- The winner is the player with the most sets on the table.

"Fishing for Quotations" is an adaptable, enjoyable way of helping students learn specific content information about works of literature during an exchange of cards. For many, the gaming process reinforces prior knowledge. Students share knowledge during this collaborative exercise, engage in active learning, and have fun in the process.

CHAPTER TWO

Innovative Discussion-Based Pedagogy

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Psychologists have identified a series of specific kinds of learning experiences that confer broad and lasting educational benefits, contributing to overall professional success regardless of field. These benefits include developing creativity, problem-solving, cognitive complexity, and flexibility (Maddux et al.); working well in diverse or dispersed groups; negotiating interpersonal problems (Tadmor et al.); tolerating ambiguity; pursuing cultural engagement; appreciating diversity; and being open to experience (Shadowen et al.). This research is important because it provides evidence for the long-term impact of certain experiences on ways of thinking rather than their short-term ability to help students pass exams. The research argues powerfully for the kinds of deep and transformative learning that college is supposed to provide but for which there has been little convincing evidence.

Much of the research mentioned was developed while studying the impact of study abroad experiences; however, some evidence suggests that the findings may be applicable to non-study abroad

contexts, which is the focus of this essay. The literature argues that by destabilizing existing norms and comparing multiple cultures, students can achieve integration of new and old ways of looking at the world. This ability to integrate leads to enhanced creativity, tolerance of ambiguity, improved ability to solve complex problems, and successful negotiation of interpersonal problems.

Likewise, some of the literature on innovative discussion-based pedagogy shines a similar spotlight on destabilization of norms followed by open-minded discussion and thoughtful reflection. Using such background research, this essay examines the importance of destabilizing normal discussion-based teaching strategies in an honors course designed to broaden students' understanding of diversity issues. The strategies are a means of creating the disequilibrium that is often mentioned in experiential and study abroad learning methodologies as a way of deepening and extending student learning. The essay first offers a glimpse into key studies of the role of discussion in promoting transformative learning. Next, it provides a close-up look at how productive discussion is managed by the instructor and undergraduate facilitators to enhance students' appreciation for the complexities involved in problems of immigration and diversity, the primary course content. Results from brief scholarship-of-teaching-and-learning (SoTL) surveys reveal the impact that an emphasis on the process of designing, implementing, and assessing destabilized discussion-based practices can have on learning. Closing the essay is a case for the importance of stressing process-oriented methods, not just content delivery, in setting up productive teacher-led or student-led discussions. The conclusion also includes a return to several additional, subtle details in discussion-based pedagogy that underlie the success of the honors first-year course and that offer some practical, adaptable suggestions for use in honors and other classrooms.

KEY STUDIES OF DISCUSSION-BASED PEDAGOGIES

The idea that students learn better through destabilizing, active experience than through passively listening to a lecture is central to the literature on discussion-based classes. "Good teaching," Donald

L. Finkel argues in his powerful book *Teaching with Your Mouth Shut*, "is the creating of those circumstances that lead to significant learning in others" (8). He contrasts that with the traditional and unexamined "Telling," by which he means both straight lecture and "discussion" designed to lead students to a preordained conclusion or, in other words, a somewhat more active form of "Telling" (2). He also argues that reading and class discussion can be turned into experiential activities. To produce this transformation, faculty can frame their courses in terms of unanswered questions or unsolved problems that will be explored together so that a sense of a partnership develops between teacher and students in the pursuit of answers that have not yet been determined. Students are thus invited into the process of academic inquiry, an experience that is often new to them. The shift in student role from recipient of knowledge to partner in inquiry, therefore, may be destabilizing, as may be the shift in professor's role from an authority professing to that of a fellow-inquirer (albeit the most experienced in the room), which also conveys respect for the contributions of the students. The shift from knowledge to questions and product to process also creates disequilibrium as the ideas of uncertainty, ambiguity, and relativity are highlighted. Disequilibrium is paired with thoughtful reflection among students and faculty, encouraging growth in both *what* students think and *the way* students think. Finkel's model immerses students in the process of inquiry, destabilizing the existing norms of education, and then brings them along a guided, reflective journey with a professor who, rather than telling them the answer, works with them to find answers to questions about which they are inspired to care. Finkel's method is an immersive, experiential, and reflective method of teaching.

Other proponents of discussion-based classroom pedagogy similarly advocate a very different classroom culture than most students have known. In *Discussion as a Way of Teaching*, Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Presskill propose a model with an overtly political stance, arguing that "discussion is a way of talking that emphasizes the inclusion of the widest variety of perspectives and a self-critical willingness to change what we believe if convinced by the arguments of others" (XVII). They argue that it is crucial to

undermine or subvert existing power dynamics in the classroom in order to encourage democratic (inclusive) dialogue and sharing of power among students of all genders, races, and socio-economic classes, dismantling the power differential among members of those groups. They focus chapters on discussion in culturally diverse classrooms and across gender differences and on keeping both students' and teachers' voices in balance. They create disequilibrium by shifting power away from faculty voices and by respecting and drawing out as many points of view as possible. They then reflect thoroughly and deeply on those voices. They focus on process by providing taxonomies of questions faculty can ask to provoke disequilibrium and reflection.

Scott P. Simkins and Mark H. Maier argue in *Just in Time Teaching* that we need to use research on how students learn to rethink teaching. Similar to the authors of study abroad literature, they focus on integration: connecting new learning to previous knowledge and asking students to grapple with new ideas and integrate them rather than just use them or regurgitate them. Their method also emphasizes process over product, giving students skills to improve thinking processes and giving faculty information about gaps in student knowledge. One example of their method of "Just in Time Teaching" (JiTT) requires students to submit answers to particular kinds of questions just before class so that faculty can adjust their lectures to address gaps in knowledge and use student examples to clarify or affirm areas of understanding, particularly in the sciences. This method is less immersive than the previous two, but it does reveal examples of student confusion so that faculty can address them. The strategy also offers some evidence that the focus on process has an impact on student performance, at least in the short run.

All three scholarly sources emphasize a movement away from a stand-and-deliver type of continuous lecture and toward activities in class that immerse students in a topic and push them to integrate new and old knowledge, learning deeply rather than memorizing information only for a test. All three also expect faculty to attend to process both in terms of their own instructional decisions and by being deliberate and explicit in articulating to students the steps in

the process of critically thoughtful discussion. But how does such process-oriented, discussion-based pedagogy work in practice, in a classroom?

A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT A DISCUSSION-BASED FIRST-YEAR HONORS COLLOQUIUM

One of the advantages of teaching in honors is the small class of motivated students who make it easy to turn every class into a teaching lab. My experience takes this one better: I teach a class on pedagogy to undergraduates who are my teaching assistants (called "facilitators") for a semester. We meet weekly to discuss discussion so that they can run the small group sections of the Honors First-Year Colloquium class. They are responsible, in pairs, for leading a 90-minute weekly discussion section with 15–20 first-year students. This is the ultimate lab: a group of super-motivated students, all of whom "get it" and are as eager as I am for each class to go well because they have to teach the material on their own the following week. In addition to organizing the material they need to cover, we spend much time talking about discussion. Why it is important, what makes a good discussion, how to draw out shy students, whether a circle or small groups work better, how to handle the over-enthusiastic talkers, what to do when emotions are triggered—we talk about it all. The dominant perspective in that classroom is the student perspective, not the faculty perspective, and we are certainly all engaged together in an inquiry about pedagogy.

Many faculty work with graduate students who teach discussion sections of large lectures, and so may find some of what I describe familiar, but several important differences exist. The first is that my facilitators are not graduate students but sophomores, some juniors, and a few seniors. The second is that the course we are teaching together is not a content class focused on relaying the basics of a field of study but a skills class focused on critical thinking, empathy, and professional skills such as working effectively in groups and managing complex projects. The overall goal is to empower first-year students to think well, think collaboratively, and communicate that thinking clearly. My facilitators are

not reinforcing content heard in lecture the way many graduate student teaching assistants are, but they are instead deliberately helping students to practice communication, collaboration, and reflection skills necessary in civil discourse. Therefore, my job is to "teach through" the facilitators as partner rather than didactic expert. I have no choice but to "teach with my mouth shut" because relying on "telling" while "teaching through" would turn the whole proposition into a game of telephone: the likelihood that the facilitators will pass on the information unchanged is virtually zero. The facilitators are enthusiastic, but they are not masters of course content material, and neither can they reliably interpret the material themselves. They are not experienced at leading discussion, nor do they have the authority to demand that students read, pay attention, and take discussion seriously. My job is to help them create discussions so compelling that they do not need authority of age or expertise with the material, making their inexperience irrelevant. This involves an intense and unrelenting focus on Finkel's "creating . . . circumstances that lead to significant learning in others" (8).

Two main ideas drawn from the literature lead to better teaching in this context. The first is the importance of creating disequilibrium to inspire motivation for learning. The second is teaching the process by which we learn content information and not just the content itself. This combination of practices gives students the maximum experience in thinking critically, and it respects their background experience, their emotional investment, and their ability to contribute.

To try to connect the students deeply enough to the topic, we introduce disequilibrium on several levels. The course content is about immigration and national identity, a deliberately challenging and political topic that both provides information that runs counter to the narrative about immigrants with which my students are familiar and sparks emotional responses. The books that the students discuss in the breakout sections challenge typical narratives about immigrants and refugees or about how the larger culture favors certain groups over others, reinforcing a sense of disorientation in students' learning, since what they thought they knew turns out to be more complicated, at the very least, or perhaps simply

incorrect. For instance, one reading is Warren St. John's nonfiction book *Outcasts United*. This book tells the story of a soccer team composed of refugee teenagers, a group that the students know nothing about. That it includes both stories about individual refugees and a dramatized account of the tensions between the refugees and the local community prompts students to begin to identify with the refugees. In addition, a required service project working with the refugee community, including coaching soccer, provides an even deeper immersion in the topic. Even for those students who have fewer direct roles in the service project, empathy with the refugees' experience is a focus of discussion. One discussion topic explores the parallels between refugees adjusting to the new world of America and first-year students adjusting to the new culture of college. This unexpected connection creates disequilibrium, and the connection between the two situations makes the topic relevant.

The first few weeks include a "fishbowl" exercise in which students discuss their own experience of being "outcasts" and the feelings that such a condition evokes, encouraging them to be vulnerable and create intense personal connections within the group. Several of the assignments are disorienting and immersive, including one that asks students to attend monthly diversity activities that are cultural activities on campus or in the community, which push them outside of their personal comfort zone. But perhaps what is most disquieting for students raised in the "No Child Left Behind" generation is that 20% of their grade is based on weekly small assignments, all of which are graded on a check system rather than numerical or letter grades to push them to prioritize feedback instead of playing the grade game, since they are unable to calculate their final grade. Put all together, students regularly report that the class was "different" from any other class they had ever taken and "more challenging" than any of the classes they were currently taking, although not because it was necessarily harder or more work but because it challenged their preconceptions and was taught "differently." The class as a whole also has an immersive element because it is part of a living-learning community; 90% of the students in the course are also living together in the same residence hall, and some of the residential programming reflects the themes

of the course. The ways that the Colloquium class meets conditions that seem to encourage openness to diversity can be seen in Table 1.

Although the results come from anonymous end-of-course surveys administered as part of modest scholarship-of-teaching-and-learning (SoTL) efforts rather than any kind of larger, controlled experiment, some compelling evidence indicates that there has been both disequilibrium created and some resultant transformation in students' openness to diversity. I have very high response rates (80%+ out of 150-200 students each year), and once I formalized the basic structure of the course in 2011, I began to see evidence of success in changing student perspectives on diversity. (See Table 2.)

In addition to internal assessments of the course, my university's Center for Community-Based Learning had one summative assignment rated by two faculty members from different departments using Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) rubrics. (See <https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>.) This independent assessment revealed evidence that the course has an impact on one of the outcomes that was found in the study abroad courses: openness. (See Table 3.)

Table 1. Class Conditions that Encourage Openness to Diversity

	Multi-Cultural Experience	Exposure to Insider Perspective	Functional Multi-Cultural Learning	Grappling with Both Cultures	Destabilization of Existing Norms
Diversity Assignment	X	X	X	X	X
Readings	X	X	X	X	X
Service Project	X	X	X	X	X

Table 2. Percent of Students Who Agreed that the Course Gave Them a Different Perspective on Immigration and Helped Them Appreciate Diversity

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
55%	84%	86%	88%	79%	84%

These results demonstrate that the highest rating, two years in a row, was for openness. Civic action and empathy are next, followed by connections to experience. The variation in ratings gives me confidence in the validity because the first-year students seem to be more open than they are skilled at synthesizing course content with their experience.

Finally, I have analyzed some data from the National Survey of Student Engagement, which was administered on my campus, comparing honors to non-honors students. In answer to the question of how much students perceive they have changed in terms of their understanding of others who are different from them, honors students report a significantly higher gain than non-honors students. Because the survey is administered in the spring, targeting first-year students and seniors, the results suggest that, among other probable contributing factors in students' academic and out-of-class experiences, the gains made specifically in the Colloquium class are lasting. (See Table 4.)

Such information convinces me that the course was successful in creating some disequilibrium and in encouraging students to

Table 3. Community-Based Learning Evaluation: Openness (Scale of 1–4)

	2013	2014	2015
Openness		1.72	2.24
Civic Action and Reflection	1.04	1.54	1.98
Empathy	.55	1.42	2.21
Connections to Experience	.30	1.18	1.85

Table 4. Perceived Gains: Understanding People of Other Backgrounds (Economic, Racial / Ethnic, Political, Religious, Nationality)

	Honors	Non-Honors	Difference
Quite a Bit	43.9%	28.5%	15.4%
Very Much	24.2%	25.8%	-1.6%
Some	13.6%	19.5%	-5.8%
Very Little	10.6%	8.5%	2.1%

become more open and interested in diversity, the kind of shift the study abroad literature suggests is helpful to long-term outcomes.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCESS IN DISCUSSION-BASED PEDAGOGY

Experiential learning and discussion replicate to some degree the immersive quality that is only one part of what prompts the shift in openness to diversity. The second shift is building an emphasis on process within the course. This shift makes particular sense in the context of a first-year seminar, where the main goal is to help the students build critical-thinking habits, empathy, and professional skills to help them master college and beyond. Also, part of the course goal is to help the students experience good discussion and then recognize the prerequisites to good discussion, the value of it, and their role in creating it. The metacognition involved in such work is perhaps more important in this case than the content of the discussions, but the students nevertheless still need to perceive the discussions as valuable enough to warrant effort and energy.

The students are required to submit weekly discussion questions. This practice serves multiple purposes, as outlined by both Finkel and Simkins and Maier. The first is a recognition that the process of identifying meaningful questions is a) not subjective, as demonstrated by the number of students who submit the same question, b) the beginning of the paper-writing process, and c) a

Finkel's Process for High Engagement in Discussion

- Students arrive with questions that spark their curiosity.
- They select which questions to discuss.
- There is a focus on specific passages to explore them thoroughly.
- Students seek contradictions, matches and mismatches with their own experience.
- They explore hypotheses, test them with evidence, and use that information to push deeper into the text. (37)

skill that needs to be developed. The weekly questions also ensure that students have done the reading, allowing me to observe at least some of every individual student's participation in class discussions and evaluate him or her at the end of the semester even though I cannot observe every discussion in the breakout sessions. The practice of weekly questions also focuses the discussion on passages or ideas that are of interest to the students, motivating them to participate. Like Simkins and Maier's "Just in Time Teaching" (JiTT) method, it allows the student facilitators (and me) to gain a sense of what the students understand or are confused by so that the class discussion can accommodate their needs. The focus on process has come to penetrate the class quite deeply. When preparing for each week's breakout session, the facilitators must first determine the purpose of the week's discussion. This was not a step I ever took myself when I was teaching. In some classes I took the lead in generating discussions, and in others a discussion pattern evolved without my being fully aware of it. But when talking to the facilitators, and when observing how their discussion went, I would get nagging feelings that some discussions were going in the wrong direction or were not going in any direction somehow, even if students were talking. Needing to help the facilitators and appease my internal nag, I began to identify the field of possible discussion directions.

I realized that some discussions are exploratory and need to be focused on who, what, or when, or definitions of concepts to make sure that the students have understood the material. Others need to connect students to the topic, asking them to relate the general topic or specific incidents to the students' own lives, which helps them care about the topic and which develops empathy. Others need to elicit the largest range of views on a topic to demonstrate the complexity of a topic or to push students out of their preconceived views on a topic. Still others need to be focused on a task the students need to complete, like brainstorming for a paper. Many discussions are designed to help students practice critical thinking, which could mean using evidence for their positions, or synthesizing (connecting ideas among texts or between lecture and text),

or noticing patterns within a text. Others are focused on modeling and practicing careful, precise thinking about a term or definition or theory. Other discussions are reflective, illuminating a process or helping students recognize what they think or how much they have accomplished. There are deliberative discussions, whose function is to demonstrate careful, balanced critical thinking and evaluate multiple positions evenly and fairly.

Being explicit about the purpose of discussion has many virtues. It helps to make sure that the discussions are efficient and purposeful so that students value class time. When I point out the purposes, and particularly when I identify the connection between purpose and what students are graded on (for example, "we are practicing the kind of critical thinking in this discussion that I am looking for on your quiz answers"), I inspire much greater student engagement.

This focus on the purpose of discussion and the process by which to meet that goal has led to a further development. The possibility of multiple purposes for discussion has prompted questions about the kinds of "moves" (Brookfield and Preskill 101) one can make in a discussion, an emphasis on process that empowers students to contribute more meaningfully to a discussion. My students had already been using a game that assigned roles to students to try to even out discussion—that is, curb the role of the talkative ones and draw out the quieter ones—so that some students were "gagged" and could not be the first to raise their hands, while others were tasked with being "devil's advocate" or "discussion starters" to give them a clear task, but also a more active role in the discussion. We expanded the game to include more roles: "clarifier," who asks follow-up questions to focus on precision and clarity; "connector," who offers or asks about connections among themes, ideas, and texts; "evidencer," who asks for specific examples, quotations, paraphrases; "observers," who point out patterns in the discussion; "extenders," who ask for examples of general or theoretical statements; "evaluators," who ask questions that seek judgment; and "summarizers," who try to pull together points made. This scheme was first presented as a game, where each student is given a card with the role explained and an example given, and then they have

to play the role. Later, after the facilitators mixed the roles so that students would have the chance to try out each one, they talked about how each role represents a conversational "move" that might be appropriate in any class, and students are encouraged to use them organically. Brookfield and Presskill have a similar list of "conversational moves" and a list of "roles" for students to practice in discussion, intending that the students will recognize their wide applicability and use them in discussion in all classes.

Another method for determining who should speak next came out of the discussions on pedagogy with student facilitators. Deliberate strategies such as the "popcorn" method have students call on each other, sometimes by tossing a "speaking object" to the next student, but most faculty members retain that control themselves, and they call on students. If there is considerable enthusiasm, a choice needs to be made about how to determine the order of speakers. Most faculty call on students, using either chronology or geography. Using chronology, the teacher carefully notices and remembers the order in which the hands went up, and he or she

Brookfield and Presskill's List of Roles in Discussion

Problem / Dilemma / Theme Poser: introduces "topic of conversation," draws on "personal ideas and experiences" to illustrate.

Reflective Analyst: records "conversation's development" and "every twenty minutes" gives "summary [of] shared concerns" and "issues the group is skirting," along with "emerging common themes."

Scrounger: listens for "helpful resources, suggestions, and tips," keeping "a record" to relay at the end.

Devil's Advocate: looks for "consensus" and articulates contrary views.

Detective: listens for "unacknowledged, unchecked, and unchallenged biases related to culture, race, class, or gender."

Theme-Spotter: identifies "themes . . . that are left unexplored" and that might be explored later.

Umpire: listens for "judgmental . . . offensive, insulting, and demeaning" comments that "contradict ground rules." (115–16)

takes great pains to ensure "first come-first served." The instructor may even relieve the students of the work of holding their hands up in the air by enumerating the order: "I saw Joey first, then Susan, then Doug." This arrangement seems fair. The second method is geography: from one end of the room to the other. This is random, but easy to remember. But neither makes sense in terms of the discussion itself. Many discussions lurch in zig zags as Joey talks about

Brookfield and Presskill's "Conversational Moves"

Questions or "Moves" that Convey Interest and Affirm Others:

- "Ask a question . . . that shows you are interested."
- "Use body language . . . to show interest."
- Make a specific comment about what you found "interesting or useful" in "another person's ideas."
- Make a comment that "paraphrases" someone else's point.
- "Express appreciation" for what you've specifically learned from someone else's comments.

Make Connections:

- Make a comment that "underscores the link between two people's contributions."
- "Contribute something that builds on . . . what someone else has said."
- Make a "summary observation" that includes "several people's contributions."

Clarify Points:

- "Ask a question" that "encourages someone else to elaborate on something that person has said."
- "Ask a cause-and-effect question"—e.g., "why do you think it is true that if X happens, then Y will occur?"

Other "Moves":

- At an "appropriate moment," ask for a "minute's silence . . . to think."
- Disagree in a "respectful and constructive way." (Brookfield and Presskill 101–02)

the point just made, Susan refers to the one before that, and Doug returns to the same point Joey was talking about, and then Dan after him builds on what Susan said about the other topic that came up, or else Doug or Dan withhold comment, feeling like the discussion has moved on and their point should be sacrificed to let the discussion move. The problem is that the students individually have information about the kind of connection they are making and the importance of their point to the discussion, but the teacher sees only perhaps eagerness if a hand shoots up or waves urgently, and he or she has no information from those gestures to determine which comments will lead to the best overall flow. Having experimented a little with online synchronous platforms like Blackboard's "Collaborate" or other webinar programs, I was struck by the scrolling typed comments that we could all read as we also listened to whoever had control of the mic. A multi-tasking moderator or a partner could identify from those comments who should speak next. This observation was raised in a discussion with facilitators, and we developed a series of hand signals drawn from ASL to signal the words "same as," "related to," and "different from" instead of a simple raised hand. Suddenly, the teacher or facilitator could

Keys to Success

- Inclusion of texts or topics or viewpoints that go against the mainstream, that provoke disequilibrium
- Classroom discussion culture of openness to new ideas, and willingness to "try them on"
- Classroom discussion culture of respectful deliberation, the idea that our friends are rational, and the onus is on us to listen carefully and thoughtfully to understand how something that seems irrational to us could be rational to someone else
- Classroom discussion habits that include analyzing function, worldview, assumptions, evidence, looking for similarities and differences, and "cultural logic"
- Classroom discussion habits that appreciate the benefit of listening to alternate viewpoints and so work to draw them out

make more informed choices. Ours typically chose geographically, chronologically, or in order of urgency those who were "same as" first, then "related to" before turning to those who intended to change the subject altogether. Students seemed to appreciate the smoother discussions, and the method gave us all—students, facilitators, and me—the opportunity to think in a different way about the discussion.

A FINAL LESSON

The consequences of articulating the purposes, steps, and strategies of discussion were manifold: my teaching improved, the facilitators' discussions improved, student engagement improved, and grades improved. So much that had been totally invisible—processes absorbed and developed over the course of years by observation, osmosis, and trial and error rather than by deliberate reflection—was suddenly revealed as a final lesson when I paid attention to subtleties of discussion pedagogy of which I had never before been conscious.

This experience has taught me that it is possible to transform students through disequilibrium that motivates students to seek answers and integrate new and old ways of thinking so that they change their perspective about deep-level attitudes such as openness to diversity. By making discussions experiential through a focus on a process that articulates how to have a good, engaging discussion, a teacher can empower students with deeper reflective skills as well as create a classroom environment that supports students' deep, lasting, and transformative learning.

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APPENDIX 1

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CHAPTER THREE

The Importance of the First-Semester Experience: Learning Communities and Clustered Classes

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I served as Director of the Honors College at William Paterson University for ten years in a half-time capacity while I also worked as a Professor of History. Last year, I took a new position as the Dean of the Pforzheimer Honors College at Pace University. Both honors colleges have special courses for first-semester honors students that are meant to help successful high school students transition into successful college students. First-semester consolidated courses can offer honors students an experience that is challenging and rigorous and that helps them to better understand the expectations of professors and the staff of the honors college.

The goal of this essay is to highlight the strengths of the two models of linked courses at William Paterson and Pace Universities to determine what might stand out as best practices. Considerable literature exists about the importance of linked classes and learning communities in determining the success of first-year students. For example, Vincent Tinto of Syracuse University posits:

> Efforts on most campuses do not go far enough to promote student retention, especially for first-year students. Add-on classes that are disconnected from one another cannot give students the cohesive environment they need to connect with faculty and other students. What are needed are learning environments, such as learning communities, that actively involve students, faculty members, and staff in shared learning activities. (5)

American universities, note John K. Fink and Karen Kurotsuchi Inkelas, have experimented with learning community models that link courses for many decades; some include a residential community, and others do not (5–6). The recent interest in learning communities emerged in the 1980s and 1990s in response to calls to reform undergraduate education (Fink and Inkelas 9). In 1984, the National Institute of Education, which is part of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, called upon American colleges and universities to "organize smaller communities of learning" and "integrate their curricula to be more inclusive, coherent, and connected" (Fink and Inkelas 10). As more students attended college, as tuition prices rose, and as state legislatures cut higher education funding while increasing attacks on the quality of education, reform movements expanded. Promoting learning communities was an important element of these reform efforts. According to Fink and Inkelas, there are currently over 500 learning communities at U.S. colleges (13), examples of a high-impact educational practice that is meant to improve the quality of student learning and more broadly the student experience.

More recently, in 2008, the Association of American Colleges and Universities released a report entitled *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They*

Matter. In it, George D. Kuh, using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and elsewhere, identified ten postsecondary educational practices found to confer substantial benefits to students in their college performance and retention. Included in the ten practices are learning communities, but also included are first-year seminars and other common intellectual experiences, which also could be construed as part of a broader definition of learning communities (Kuh 11).

Both William Paterson and Pace Universities have adopted such best practices, placing students into their first-semester courses so that considerable control can be exerted over course planning. At William Paterson University, a public regional institution in New Jersey, first-semester students are usually placed into honors clusters, three courses taught by collaborating faculty. The courses are taught back-to-back two or three days a week. The cluster is nine or ten credits that compose most of the students' course load in the first semester. The three courses count for honors credit, and all are part of the university core curriculum. In some cases, the classes are also designated writing intensive. Therefore, the students make progress in the core and toward their honors degree by taking the cluster.

In clustered classes, the faculty choose a theme and work together to design plenary-like sessions that require meetings and regular email contact in the months before the semester begins. The goal is to attain considerable overlap between some of the topics in the three classes, enabling students to experience a thoughtful cross-disciplinary academic home base in their first semester. The faculty teaching in the clusters must be dedicated to the courses, one another, and the students. Many excellent members of the faculty balk at the time the clusters take, but the experience is certainly rewarding because it allows for the exchange of ideas and pedagogical experimentation among colleagues. A core of faculty members remain committed to the clusters and find them especially rewarding because they cultivate professional growth.

Of course, some students can find the clusters quite intimidating. The clusters are deliberately rigorous, requiring considerable

time and effort. The goal is to have students develop the critical reading, thinking, and writing skills they will need to manage college-level courses. Students often refer to the clusters as "boot camp" because of their intensity. First-semester students are often unprepared for the expectations of college faculty, and they are surprised when they do poorly on assignments. Honors students can be particularly alarmed when they receive low grades. The cluster format builds in a support network for students. The students console one another in late September when they are not doing as well as they anticipated, and some will organize study groups or writing groups or work together less formally to improve their preparedness for their classes. Because of the close relationships between students and cluster faculty, conversations examine what constitutes satisfactory college-level work in more detail than might take place in other classes. More importantly, the students and faculty members know one another, so the students are less anxious about making an appointment to speak with a professor or stopping in during office hours. College students recognize their instructors as partners, and this observation is especially true of honors students who understand that they need to cultivate relationships with faculty in order to undertake independent study courses and undergraduate research projects.

One semester, a colleague suggested we have the cluster students write letters at the end of term and address them to next year's cohort. The letters were very revealing. The students wrote about their frustration early in the semester over the level of difficulty of the cluster courses, but they also reassured the new students that they would receive considerable support from the faculty and one another. We used the letters every semester thereafter, and they helped create connections between the first-year students and the sophomores, many of whom served as mentors. This move supported our larger goal of connecting first-year students to a range of people within the university community; the more points of connection offered to the students, the more likely they will find an anchor on campus, increasing their likelihood of persistence.

Many students acknowledged the cluster as a transformative experience, one that made them more confident of their ability to

succeed at the university. Moreover, I have had juniors, seniors, and alumni tell me that the cluster was the most important academic experience they had at college. Nevertheless, clusters are complicated creations, and most universities opt for more modest first-semester programs that link courses in a less intensive way.

At Pace University, a private national university in New York, first-semester students are commonly assigned to learning communities of two honors courses. Faculty have quite a bit of flexibility in the structure of the learning community. In some learning communities, faculty collaborate on a shared topic but do not teach together. The classes often meet back-to-back, but this arrangement is not always the case. Other learning communities are jointly taught interdisciplinary courses that focus on one theme. In one case, the learning community includes two courses in the fall and two in the spring and requires residential students to live together on a specific floor in a residence hall. Clearly, the different models vary in their demands.

As with clusters, the students in the learning communities get to know members of the honors faculty well, bond closely with one another, and engage in rich collaborative learning. The practice of assigning first-semester students to connected courses helps to situate them in the institution, provides them with supportive allies, and facilitates successful performance at the college level, assets that are especially important for commuter students who are often less integrated into campus life. The honors learning communities are also academically demanding, and they teach students how to meet the expectations of college professors.

Linked courses and learning communities improve the student experience, but faculty teaching in clusters and learning communities also benefit from their collaboration, whether it be shared teaching of a class or sharing a theme. Colleagues become better connected, better able to learn from one another's pedagogy and from experimenting with teaching methods that might not work in a more traditional classroom setting.

Cluster programs and learning communities have proven themselves a best practice in higher education, but they come at a

cost. Departments can be wary of allowing popular faculty to teach smaller honors courses instead of larger traditional sections, especially when adjunct faculty members need to be hired to cover the standard course. Pace's learning community model did prove easier to administer, fund, and manage than the cluster program at William Patterson, where faculty members teaching in clusters earn an extra credit of salary for the additional work, making administrators reluctant to encourage program growth. Also, many faculty members in clusters feel one credit is insufficient compensation for the work entailed. Moreover, placing all the first-year students into a cluster can be hard. In the case of honors students pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree who had very rigid schedules with a reduced set of core requirements, none were in the clustered courses. Some students who entered the university with credit for numerous AP courses could not be placed into a cluster because the clusters contain fundamental core classes, resulting in some first-year students missing an opportunity that most found transformational. That these groups were excluded was not ideal.

Pace's learning community model provides students with more options and proves easier to administer. Combining two courses instead of three and allowing faculty the option of working collaboratively or individually meant that the compositions of the learning communities could change more readily over time and more faculty could be involved in teaching linked courses. Faculty members receive additional compensation for participating in learning communities, and for full-time faculty the reward is comparable to that provided to faculty in cluster courses. Plus students in every major have the opportunity to participate in at least one learning community because they are less credit-intensive and contain a more varied array of courses. Importantly, all first-year students are part of a learning community that is often a transformative experience.

The two-course learning community model has another advantage. The large block of time required for the cluster could be challenging for students who find it difficult to remain focused for three classes in a row. Breaks occur between classes, but concentrating for a four-hour stretch can be hard. The learning communities

are more flexible, and no student is compelled to take courses that meet back-to-back. Students can also select a learning community that is more closely related to their majors or a particular topic of interest and elect to take more than one learning community set of paired courses, whereas the clusters are more limited and students take only one.

All college students would benefit from being part of learning communities in their first semester, but I would argue that they especially benefit honors students. While high-achieving students come to college having been successful high school students, often better prepared for their studies than the general student body, college is different and overwhelming to many students, even for the very bright ones. Honors students benefit from forging close relationships with members of the faculty with whom they might network and find research opportunities. Honors students are often the institution's best candidates for prestigious scholarships, and to be strong applicants they need close relations with faculty mentors who understand how systems work on campus and beyond. Encouraging honors students to thrive during their first semester means those students can achieve some great things for themselves and for the institution.

Research indicates that learning communities work because they challenge and support students. According to Chun-Mei Zhao and George D. Kuh:

> Done well, the interdisciplinary and interactive nature of learning communities introduces students to complex, diverse perspectives, as contrasted with expecting students to come up with the 'right' answer which is characteristic of traditional pedagogical approaches such as the large lecture class. The structure of learning communities also promotes critical thinking and contextual learning, skills that are increasingly important in an era of information overload. . . . (118)

Learning communities are important for student success, and Tinto shows that students in learning communities have better grades

and higher rates of retention than those in traditional courses. Zhao and Kuh used the NSSE to assess the reports of over 80,000 undergraduates; they found:

> Participating in learning communities is uniformly and positive [sic] linked with student academic performance, engagement in educationally fruitful activities (such as academic integration, active and collaborative learning, and interaction with faculty members), gains associated with college attendance, and overall satisfaction with the college experience. (124)

At the end of the first semester, learning communities and clusters transform students by making them better readers, thinkers, and writers prepared to succeed in college. Students appreciate how different disciplines consider similar texts, ideas, and events from a range of perspectives, and they recognize that developing that skill is an important one to possess. They often connect well to a group of peers, feel at home on the college campus, and are confident in their ability to do college.

While requiring institutional investment, linked courses and learning communities create students who have higher retention and graduation rates than students who take a number of standalone courses during their first semester. Tinto writes:

> institutions that provide academic, social, and personal support encourage persistence . . . [and] students are more likely to stay in schools that involve them as valued members of the institution. The frequency and quality of contact with faculty, staff, and other students have repeatedly been shown to be independent predictors of student persistence. (5–6)

Clustered programs and other forms of learning communities grow from an investment of the institution, the faculty, and the students. They help students comprehend the expectations of college in a supportive setting and allow them to settle into the community for the long term. Learning communities are an integral part of student

success, especially in the first year, and they are an important tool for honors educators keen on embracing new learners in their honors communities.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Linking Honors Courses: A New Approach to Defining Honors Pedagogy

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INTRODUCTION

The shift in higher education toward outcome-based learning represents a significant opportunity for honors. By removing disciplinary boundaries related to teaching content knowledge, outcome-based learning increases opportunities for connecting student learning across courses within well-defined honors curricula. It also empowers honors students, many of whom are eager to take leadership of their educational experiences, to extend their learning in new ways. This essay presents an example of how drawing connections across honors courses within a curriculum creates unique opportunities for engaged, transformative learning and, unexpectedly, for the development of an honors program identity.

OVERVIEW OF THE HONORS FIRST-YEAR CURRICULUM

To develop intentional strategies toward honors student learning, for the past several years, the Roger Williams University (RWU) Honors Program has been linking three separate courses within the honors program curriculum. These courses incorporate, in various configurations, the entire cohort of honors first-year students (approximately 60 students; 5% of the incoming class).

The preparation for the honors first-year courses begins in the summer prior to students' arrival at the university, via a summer assignment explicitly designed to introduce the language and pedagogy of the honors first-year experience. Once the academic year begins, all students also complete a combination of courses designed to integrate the honors learning outcomes, reinforce the shared student-learning vocabulary, and encourage students to extend their learning beyond the confines of the individual course. These courses include the following:

- HON/CORE 104: Literature, Philosophy, and the Examined Life is designed to give students practice making connections between literary and philosophical texts/concepts. This course is also designated as the Honors Living-Learning Community (LLC).
- HON 100: Foundations of Honors is a one-credit course intended to introduce students to the unique learning outcomes of our honors program. As part of this introduction to honors, all students participate in a City as Text™ (CAT) experience and initiate an honors e-portfolio.
- HON/WTNG 102: Expository Writing, How Writing Works is a required general education writing course aimed at helping students develop writing-process skills and rhetorical knowledge about how writing works in academic spheres.

All incoming first-year students are simultaneously enrolled in HON/CORE 104 and HON 100 during the fall semester; approximately two-thirds of the cohort are also enrolled in HON/WTNG 102.

The three professors teaching these courses develop an integrated course design and a shared vocabulary that create multiple opportunities for students not only to practice higher-level critical habits of mind but also to link knowledge and skills and make connections across all three courses. These goals and outcomes are chosen based upon best practices in First-Year Experience, general education, and our institution's honors program outcomes. This shared conceptual vocabulary includes

- **Question Propagation** and a "**Higher Quality of Ignorance**": Stuart Firestein's TED Talk, "The Pursuit of Ignorance," works well in the classroom to privilege ignorance over knowledge by emphasizing that the value of knowledge is to produce ignorance, a point that students sometimes find paradoxical. Firestein celebrates the term "question propagation," a concept he traces back to Immanuel Kant, who noted that "Every answer given on principle of experience begets a fresh question" (qtd. in Firestein 9:03).
- **Sustained Reflection** (a.k.a. the "slow hunch"): This practice creates tolerance for ambiguity when questions do not resolve themselves quickly and/or allows ideas to percolate over time rather than assuming that questions do or "should" have immediate, clear answers. The "slow hunch" concept is featured in Steven Johnson's TED Talk, "Where Good Ideas Come From."
- **Vertical Thinking**: This habit of mind deliberately slows down thinking to consider ideas with greater specificity and nuance; rather than trying to come up with "more" ideas, this process aims to add depth to current thinking.
- **Metacognition**: This happens when students think about thinking to assess their own knowledge, skills, and learning.
- **Transfer** (or "linking"): This goal occurs when students recognize moments when the knowledge or skills acquired in one class might be utilized in another, even while acknowledging differences in application.

Creating a collaborative, intentional teaching and learning environment in which all three professors use and apply these habits of mind (intentionally stressing the shared vocabulary) is key to this process. To maximize our ability to recognize when students are making connections across courses and to create both subtle and overt opportunities for them to do so, the instructors also meet weekly in person and correspond via email to share course readings, content, and highlights of class discussion. These interactions create a dynamic teaching experience that allows the instructors to supplement their instructional plans and make adjustments to align with one another, as needed.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT AND HONORS RETREAT

The Honors Summer Assignment and Honors Retreat give students an opportunity to actively engage with the concepts described earlier. All incoming first-year honors students view two TED Talks (Stuart Firestein's "The Pursuit of Ignorance" and Steven Johnson's "Where Good Ideas Come From"), followed by a challenging writing assignment. Students are asked to analyze and deploy concepts introduced in the videos, such as question propagation, liquid networking, and pursuing a higher level of ignorance. One goal is to explode the "empty bucket" concept of learning, in which students scoop facts and concepts into the empty buckets of their minds for the primary purpose of regurgitation. In contrast, the summer assignment introduces a recursive learning paradigm of reflective inquiry, where ignorance becomes a valuable commodity, especially when catalyzed to generate questions that lead to directed or "vertical" research. To complete the three-part summer assignment, students have to recognize first the conceptual links between the two assigned TED Talks and then apply that knowledge by reverse engineering the process of question generation and the pursuit of ignorance in a completely unrelated text. (In this iteration, an essay by Malcolm Gladwell, although many thoughtful inductive essays would suffice.) The third portion of the summer essay asks students to write a 500–600 word reflection describing how the assignment develops a "higher quality of ignorance" for them. They

share these essays at the Honors Retreat, which is the day before classes begin. Students engage in conversations that are intense and positive and that turn again and again to surprise at the notion that "ignorance" could be positive and to the discomfort caused by a model of knowledge that foregrounds ambiguity.

The retreat thus both acknowledges the challenge inherent in this new paradigm and reifies abstract concepts into concrete practice. In contrast to previous years, students in our recent cohort have reported in focus groups that the summer assignment and retreat engaged them intellectually and facilitated communication. The focus on making conceptual links, propagating questions, and valuing ignorance in sustained reflection continue through the entire semester in all three fall semester courses, giving students more and more opportunities to both practice and transfer these skills.

HON/CORE 104:
LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE EXAMINED LIFE

In order to expand on the summer retreat discussions and the students' understanding of both the propagation of questions and the pursuit of ignorance, on the first day of HON/CORE 104 students watch a short video of the "Question Game" from Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and play the game or, rather, try to play the game themselves. They find it extremely difficult, yet exhilarating. Students quickly learn not only that sustained question propagation is difficult but that it also leads nowhere. The professor then asks students to reflect on this activity by linking it with their summer assignment/retreat activities that had emphasized the importance of question propagation. "Is question propagation actually productive? When? How? Why?" This discussion sets the foundation for the introduction of a new critical habit of mind: sustained reflection, which is precisely what Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's game does not allow.

CORE 104 continues this metacognitive practice across each unit of literature and philosophy. For example, when reading *The*

Analects of Confucius by Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr., students contrast free-association interpretations with interpretations of the same analect based on contextual reading. This process again models how to use ignorance to go vertical by asking questions and seeking information. (In this case cultural background information and specific research into key terms and concepts used throughout the *Analects*.) The new information leads to sustained reflection and the revision of initial interpretations. Students are asked to track their changing interpretations and reflect on the difference in knowledge over sustained question propagation fueled by new knowledge.

In a later unit, students tackle David Hume's "Of Personal Identity," typically reading only three or four paragraphs together per day. This strategy allows students a chance to practice vertical thinking. By slowing down to read these dense philosophical paragraphs closely with greater specificity rather than trying simply to paraphrase or avoid complexity by hyperlinking to tangentially related ideas, students again practice sustained reflection that allows them to change and revise their questions over time. Each unit in this course thus repeats, in varied and concrete ways, the practice of scholarly inquiry to help students build their identity as honors students and as scholars.

HON/WTNG 102:
EXPOSITORY WRITING—HOW WRITING WORKS

Approximately two-thirds of the incoming honors students are simultaneously enrolled in Expository Writing, the first of two required writing courses at RWU, which is intended to help students develop a conceptual map of how writing works by building their rhetorical and writing-process knowledge. Within this framework, the course focuses on scholarly inquiry and metacognitive practices as they relate to writing. Students focus their inquiry by exploring conceptions of literacy, beginning with researching different forms of literacy such as digital literacy, information literacy, visual literacy, numerical literacy, or cultural literacy. This initial

research into conceptions of literacy then serves as the foundation for the final assignment in the class: a literacy narrative. In their literacy narrative, students reflect on their own literacy experiences, beliefs, and practices by making them the subject of their inquiry. Kara Poe Alexander notes that literacy narratives—as a genre—"prompt [writers] to explore and reflect on how their past experiences with language, literacy, and schooling inform their perceptions of themselves as writers and literate beings" (609). In other words, the genre of literacy narrative requires the writer to reflect critically on his or her literacy behaviors, both past and present, and to draw connections between those behaviors and culturally scripted ideas about literacy.

The literacy narrative is a challenging assignment for students on multiple levels. First, it asks them to blend personal and academic writing in a single text. Many students have been trained to avoid drawing on personal experience in academic writing; in this assignment, however, they are explicitly required to use their own story as both a framework for the narrative and as a source of evidence. The second challenge afforded by the literacy narrative is the necessity of reexamining their own experiences. Contextualizing a pivotal moment in their literacy development by putting it in conversation with others' arguments about literacy requires them to articulate what they now understand that they did not before. In other words, it is not sufficient for the literacy narrative to tell a story about a reading or writing experience when they were younger; the narrative assignment demands that students challenge or complicate their own as well as culturally scripted beliefs about literacy.

Throughout the class, and especially while working on the literacy narrative assignment, we make explicit connections to the work students have done in their HON/CORE 104 and HON 100 classes. We consider how their work with question generation might apply in this situation where they are asking questions about literacy and about their own experiences; we use a shared vocabulary, such as the idea of vertical questions that move beyond surface-level concerns for more nuanced investigations; and, of course, the assignment

itself requires sustained reflection as they re-examine their own experiences in light of their research findings relating to what others have to say about literacy. Of particular importance to them seems to be the opportunity to develop their metacognitive skills by reflecting on their own reading and writing experiences and by making connections to their research. One student observed:

> It was interesting to delve back into the past and critically evaluate how a particular experience with literacy shaped me as a learner. Focusing on concrete details in the narrative component of my essay and making effective connections to my sources was a challenging, but enjoyable process.

While students respond with varying degrees of enthusiasm to the challenges of this assignment, most of them ultimately find value in it, especially as they recognize how it resonates with the skills and concepts they have been practicing in their linked honors classes.

HON 100:
FOUNDATIONS OF HONORS

This one-credit course introduces students to the learning goals of our honors program through common pedagogical approaches within honors, notably City as Text™ (CAT) and the honors e-portfolio. Of special importance to this chapter, students complete a series of CAT experiences that teach students systematic approaches for integrating traditional and experiential-learning approaches within our honors curriculum, particularly HON/CORE 104 and HON/WTNG 102, the other honors first-year experience courses. Honors CAT opportunities, as Ellen Hostetter notes, promote student engagement beyond the confines of the classroom and encourage student application of knowledge to the local community (63). (For additional readings about CAT, see Braid and Long, *Place as Text*; Machonis, *Shatter the Glassy Stare*; and Long, *Writing on Your Feet*.) Through the honors CAT activities, students build upon the Honors Summer Assignment and the other honors first-year courses to practice skills critical to the transfer or linking of learning,

including the propagation of questions, vertical thinking, and sustained reflections.

The honors CAT assignments require students to practice a particular methodological sequence involving the following skills: observations, engagement, reflection, and inquiry. The assignments enable students to experience multiple CAT encounters with the history and people of a region and with a primed awareness of the area's most pressing social and community concerns. Building upon traditional CAT approaches, students receive instruction and feedback regarding social science methodologies for conducting naturalistic observations, for engaging and interviewing community members, and for building upon these experiential components to generate new scholarly questions. These experiences represent the foundational levels of the program's learning outcomes.

Equally importantly, the experiences also provide opportunities to connect with and reinforce students' learning in HON/CORE 104 and HON/WTNG 102. Through the Honors CAT experiences, students build upon their observations and engagements with the community to design new questions regarding the history, economy, and sociology of the place and its people.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

To assess our experimentation with linked courses in the Honors First-Year Experience, we ask students to write about the connections they recognized. Students in Expository Writing finish the semester by writing a final metacognitive piece that asks them to reflect on meaningful connections they have found between the knowledge and skills acquired in this course and in other RWU courses, especially in the other linked honors courses. Most students focus their final reflections on the connections they have found across the classes in terms of practicing question propagation and sustained reflection. They describe being asked to think vertically in ways that have not previously been required of them. As one student points to the significant correlations he found between HON/WTNG 102 and HON/CORE 104, he explains:

> With assignments such as the Omelas Response, Confucian Analect Analysis, and Hume Close Reading [in HON/CORE 104], we gained experience with concepts and practices that mirror and enhance much of what we were also learning and doing in [HON/]WTNG 102: . . . sustained reflection; synthesis; collaboration; making meaning; deepening understanding.

He goes on to say that he believes those experiences "enable us/me to build a habit of reflection to generate more thoughts, questions, and ideas for future research and writing." While ascertaining whether this student would have found the same significant value in the concepts we studied and practiced across the first-year honors courses if his exposure had been via one class rather than all three is impossible, that he viewed those experiences as habit-building and that he explicitly articulated the link between these classes signal that we are on the right track in our curriculum development.

Similarly, another student details how metacognition and vertical thinking have connected the three honors classes, explaining how she has applied them to three different assignments. Her reflection focuses more specifically on the details of her approach to these assignments and specifically on how she went vertical in research for her HON 100 City as Text assignment. Researching in this way, reflecting on what she was finding, and then developing new questions have had a significant impact on her thinking.

> "Going vertical" in my research changed the way I understand racism in Rhode Island. Prior to conducting the CAT, I was aware of systemic oppression throughout the United States, but I was disturbed to see how ingrained white privilege is throughout Rhode Island. I was able to apply the metacognitive knowledge that I had acquired in WTNG 102 to reflect on my role in bringing awareness to racism and how to write honestly about this serious subject, especially in the light of the BlackOut and the racist backlash that occurred on our own campus.

When viewed alongside the other reflections, most of which echo similar sentiments, albeit with less detail, this passage and statements from the other students demonstrate that students are indeed transferring the knowledge and skills acquired in one setting to others and doing so in ways that are meaningful to them both academically and personally.

The students' end-of-semester reflections are only one mechanism for assessment, and we recognize, of course, that because the reflections are a final assignment, they are far from objective. The near unanimity, however, with which students have discussed how important developing good questions, thinking vertically, and sustaining reflection are across all three courses suggests that students are recognizing the value of transferring their learning across the curriculum. Importantly, moreover, we note that the students' reflections on the connections they have found across the linked honors courses are unsurprising in that they comment on the habits-of-mind and shared conceptual vocabulary we have developed to connect the Honors FYE courses. That these final student comments confirm that they learned what we were trying to teach them is certainly gratifying, but it is also predictable.

What we did not predict, and were delighted to discover resulting from this experiment in a linked curriculum, is the development of our programmatic identity. We initiated this Honors First-Year Experience as we were developing the learning domains for our program outcomes: scholarly inquiry, community engagement, and the public sphere. We chose the habits of mind/shared vocabulary for transfer with the program outcomes in mind, but we did not emphasize the program outcomes in our respective courses. We have discovered that students intuitively connect the habits-of-mind and conceptual vocabulary from their courses to the honors program, as much as if to say question propagation and sustained reflection are what we do in honors. In other words, they draw the connections between the work of the classes and the honors program as a whole, articulating in those connections a programmatic identity.

Focus groups for the 2018 cohort reveal that students who participated in the linked FYE believe the honors curriculum encourages and facilitates scholarly inquiry, and they understand the importance of communicating scholarly activity to public audiences. In short, for them, the program outcomes differentiate the honors program from their other courses at the university. In contrast, students who entered the program before the linked FYE curriculum, such as the focus groups for the 2016 cohort, perceive little difference between the honors courses and their other courses at the university. Although we did not intend for our linked curriculum to be a means of building program identity, it has been deeply significant. Students now have a better sense of what they are committing to when they join the honors program. According to the focus group reports for the 2018 cohort, the honors experience "lived up to and exceeded expectations." This assessment is of no small consequence for a program like ours, in which the curriculum is delivered largely by honors sections of the general education courses that all students take. By consistently reminding students that sustained inquiry in the pursuit of ignorance provides training in the highest standards of academic excellence, perhaps we help them not only to transition into college but also to define themselves within the community of scholars.

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BREAKING BARRIERS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

BREAKING BARRIERS WITH FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING EXCELLENCE

CHAPTER FIVE

Honors Components in Honors Faculty Development

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INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we describe the design characteristics of a professional development course about honors teaching. We claim that the principles of learning and teaching in honors are also applicable to the design of a course for honors faculty.

The context of our research is Utrecht University in The Netherlands, a large and high-ranking research university that offers undergraduate and graduate programs in a wide variety of academic disciplines. Dutch higher education does not have a longstanding

tradition in honors; Utrecht University was among the first research universities that started experimenting with honors programs in the 1990s. The rationale was to offer extra challenges and space for experimentation to high-performing and motivated students. Honors developed rapidly, and today Utrecht University has a university-wide honors program as well as honors opportunities for students in all schools and departments.

Further development of honors is one of the strategic goals of the university. An important project in this context is the professional development of honors teachers. That is why the university's Center of Excellence in University Teaching (CEUT) started a course in honors teaching in 2011. The design of this professional development course about honors teaching was based on some of the key principles of honors pedagogy: creation of a learning community, substantial freedom for the learners within a structured context, and academic challenge. We claim that these honors principles, built into the course, largely explain the success of the course in terms of learning outcomes.

Our chapter is based on evidence from the first three honors teaching courses offered at Utrecht University. We use the outcomes of the course evaluations as well as interviews with alumni of the three courses. These interviews were conducted a few months after completion of the course in order to verify participants' perception of the quality of the course and the learning outcomes.

The second part of this chapter focuses on this central question: to what extent have the design principles of our professional development course about honors teaching, based on key notions of honors pedagogy, made an impact on the learning outcomes? Before exploring an answer, we shall discuss the characteristics of honors pedagogy as put forward in the research literature. And we shall describe the design of the honors teaching course and its outcomes for the participants. We end with a conclusion and discussion on the merits of these findings.

HONORS PEDAGOGY

The body of empirical academic literature on effective teaching approaches for honors students in higher education is limited (Achterberg, Clark, Rinn and Plucker, and Scager). Most of the available literature is descriptive in nature and based on case studies. A considerable amount of empirical research literature, however, about pedagogy for gifted students in primary and secondary schools claims the effectiveness of certain teaching strategies. In this descriptive and empirical literature, three principles stand out as prerequisites for honors pedagogy: enhancing academic competence, offering freedom in what and how students want to learn, and creating a community (Wolfensberger).

Enhancing academic competence is essential to honors education, where the emphasis is generally placed on enhancing the depth and scope of students' academic knowledge rather than on speeding up and offering students "more of the same." Acceleration can play a role in combination with enrichment, but it is not a goal in itself. Honors learning activities, according to Cheryl Achterberg, are rich both in their theoretical component and in their relationships to practice; they challenge students intellectually and promote integration, a multidisciplinary approach, critical thinking, and the handling of rich study materials. This approach suits the needs of honors students, writes Donald P. Kaczvinsky, "who are more academically confident, have greater intellectual interests, and are more willing to challenge their accepted values, beliefs, and ideas" (93). Gifted students do not feel challenged by the typical pre-structured courses that dominate most of education. The standard learning activities do not fit the needs of honors students who seek enrichment, differentiation, acceleration, and better and advanced lessons (Reis and Renzulli). Higher-level thinking skills and inquiry-based learning fit these requirements (Shore and Kanevsky, Van Tassel-Baska and Brown) as well as discovery learning, less scaffolding, less structure (Snow and Swanson), and situated learning (Gruber and Mandl).

A second important element in the design of honors education, Marca V. C. Wolfensberger suggests, is offering the freedom to

make one's own choices. In combination with rich learning activities, freedom offers students challenge. Karen B. Rogers states that, besides the enhancement of academic competence by consistent challenge and focus on depth and complexity, providing opportunities to work independently is important in the development of gifted students in primary and secondary education. Lannie S. Kanevsky and Tracey Keighley found that giving students more choice and control over their learning helped gifted high school students to overcome their boredom. Research also presents clues for the role of the teacher. High-ability students prefer a caring teacher who allows student autonomy (Kanevsky and Keighley, Marra and Palmer).

Pierre J. Van Eijl, Marca V. C. Wolfensberger, and Albert Pilot emphasize the importance of community building for and with groups of honors students. Constructivist learning theories that argue that knowledge is constructed in interaction with others support this claim. The learning community boosts productive interaction among students, teachers, and other professionals, which leads to enhanced learning experiences for students (Van Ginkel et al.). In addition, within the community activities students have the opportunity to develop skills that are related to the character of the honors program, such as organizational and leadership skills (Van Ginkel et al.).

All three components are important. They are all conducive to an optimal learning climate for honors students. Honors pedagogy, of course, is not limited to giving extra work; instead, it constitutes a different way of working in a stimulating environment with peers. Activating the three components allows a viable alternative to simply adding to workloads in honors.

Motivational theories offer validation of the importance of the three components. Self-determination theory has proven to be useful in explaining the variation in students' learning strategies, performance, and persistence: "People whose motivation is authentic . . ." argue Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, "have more interest, excitement, and confidence, which in turn is manifest both as enhanced performance, persistence and creativity and

as heightened vitality, self-esteem, and general well-being" (69). The self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan states that much of human motivation is based on a set of innate psychological needs: competence, self-determination, and interpersonal relatedness. The three principles identified as essential to honors pedagogy—academic competence, autonomy, community—are closely related to these three needs. Mastering challenging academic tasks, academic competence, enhances a more general feeling of competence. An environment in which students have some autonomy and can make choices will support the feeling of self-determination, which again fuels intrinsic motivation. Relatedness—feelings connected with significant others—is an important aspect of a community.

THE HONORS TEACHING COURSE

Theories on honors pedagogy and motivational theories underpin the design of our honors teaching course. The format of our faculty development course about honors teaching was based on the model of Utrecht University's longstanding educational leadership course, organized by its Center of Excellence in University Teaching (CEUT). Hetty Grunefeld and Theo Wubbels regard this substantial leadership course as very successful; thus, for our course we adopted a number of the organizing principles of that leadership course:

- Select participants, a maximum of 16 faculty members from a wide range of schools and departments, to be in the group;
- Make sure that the participants have ample opportunity for bonding and for informal conversation;
- Bring in experts who can combine insights about state-of-the-art pedagogy with an interactive approach and who allow for the participants to link their own experiences;
- Make participants carry out an intervention in their own honors teaching; the interventions carry on throughout the course and are regularly discussed during the meetings in

small subgroups of three to four members, who query and give suggestions to each other about their intervention;

- Provide the participants with a "Reading Table" of rich literature and research resources from which they can choose, depending on their own questions and needs;
- Allow for discussion and debate about all aspects of the course, particularly about the relationships between course content and the teaching practices of the participants;
- Choose course locations where the participants are really away from their daily routines.

These design components reflect some of the key success factors of professional development for teachers, as identified by Michael S. Garet et al.: actively engaging participants in the process, creating cohesion among the various components of a professionalization course, and focusing on participants' domain of academic expertise and related pedagogies. Kurt W. Clausen, Anna-Marie Aquino, and Ron Wideman have shown that collaborative learning in a team or group is also a success factor in professional development; this is also the case for the use of reflection on action, as in our interventions in the teacher's own educational setting. Participants judge how successful their interventions were and whether changes to what they did could have resulted in different outcomes. This reflection-on-action occurs in the collegial consultation rounds that occur regularly within the course. Figure 1 summarizes the course format.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Figure 1 shows that the first two meetings of our honors teaching course focus on the introduction and discussion of evidence-based knowledge about honors teaching. Since we consider the first three executions of the courses here, we have data about six such meetings. The participants, all of them experienced teachers, were positive about their growth in knowledge and understanding with regard to learning and teaching in honors:

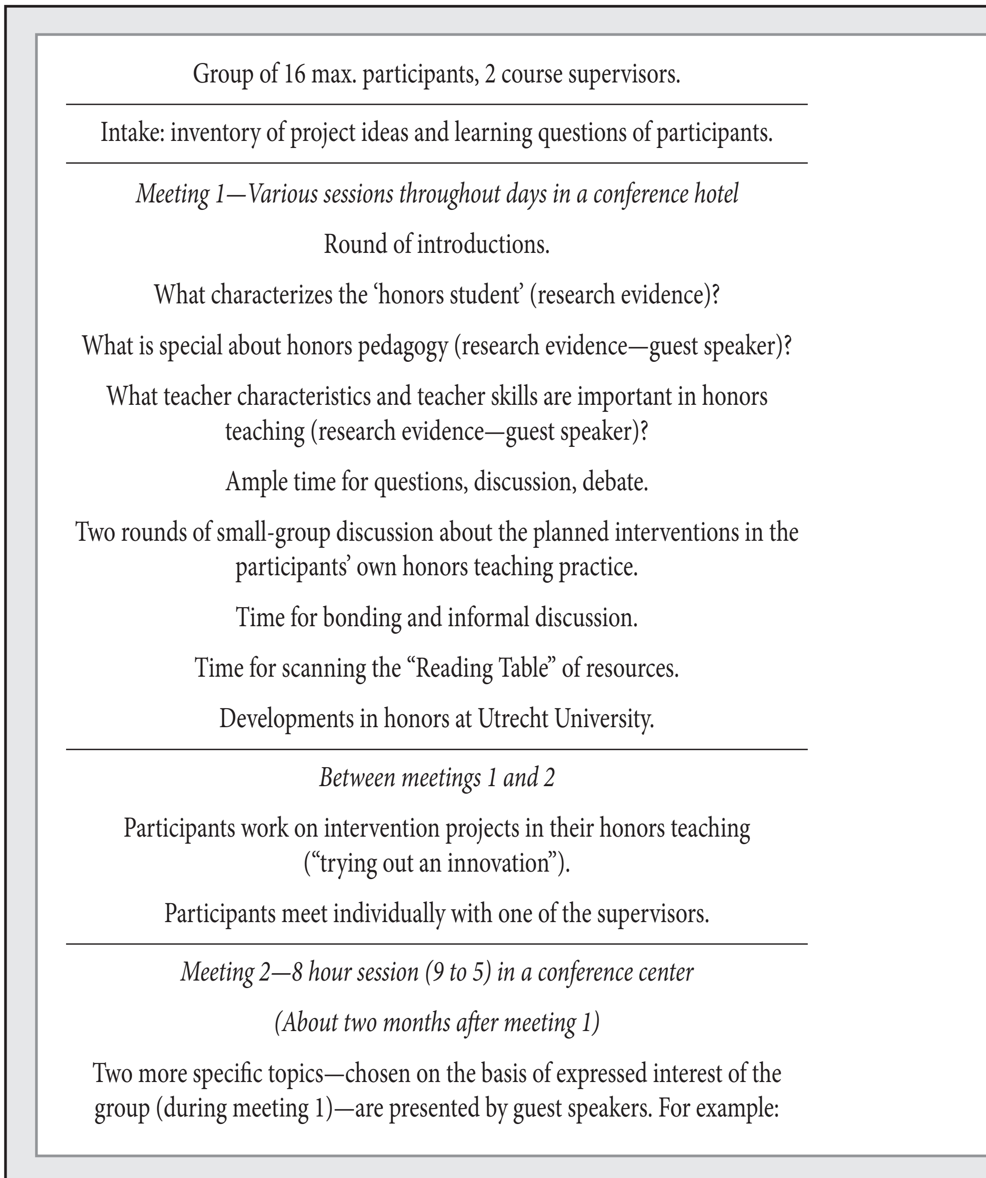
- 4.5 or higher on a five-point Likert scale for four meetings;
- 4.1 for a fifth meeting;
- and a disappointing 3.4 for the one meeting where one guest speaker did not present strong empirical evidence about aspects of honors teaching and did not succeed in relating to the participants in a way that invited discussion and debate.

The panel evaluations during the third meeting of each course confirm that the participants were satisfied with the course, reported that they gained many new insights, and were eager to continue peer conversation about their honors teaching after the course. They reported that they felt empowered to understand honors students' needs and to improve their honors teaching. Another comment that many participants shared was that they perceived the course's theoretical insights—linked to honors practice—as very useful. Here is one typical comment: "The lectures, the discussions, the input from a variety of honors programs—it changed me. It lifted me to a higher level of understanding."

Fourteen participants provided extensive feedback after the course, either in their response to a semi-open questionnaire (first group only) or in an interview (all groups). Almost all of them have changed their approach and practices in honors teaching as a result of the course. Many of them report that they now realize that honors education is largely about moving "out of your comfort zone," not only for the students but also for themselves as teachers. As a result they have started to experiment more in their honors classes and to create more variation in their teaching approaches. Importantly, some of the respondents report that thanks to the course they now dare to be more authentic. One participant wrote, "The course made me feel more secure and safe in my honors teaching. . . . I feel freer to make changes in my classes, to experiment, and to use tools for reflection by the students. . . . I dare to embrace my new ideas and to use them in classroom practice." Two participants report that they now have more personal contacts with their honors students as a result of the course. One of them said, "I take more time to listen to my students, not only about their reflection,

but also during classroom discussions. I notice that I succeed better in creating a rather silent, intensive thinking zone in which all of us together create new knowledge." Another respondent told us that

FIGURE 1: FORMAT OF COURSE ON HONORS TEACHING



Group of 16 max. participants, 2 course supervisors.

Intake: inventory of project ideas and learning questions of participants.

Meeting 1—Various sessions throughout days in a conference hotel

Round of introductions.

What characterizes the 'honors student' (research evidence)?

What is special about honors pedagogy (research evidence—guest speaker)?

What teacher characteristics and teacher skills are important in honors teaching (research evidence—guest speaker)?

Ample time for questions, discussion, debate.

Two rounds of small-group discussion about the planned interventions in the participants' own honors teaching practice.

Time for bonding and informal discussion.

Time for scanning the "Reading Table" of resources.

Developments in honors at Utrecht University.

Between meetings 1 and 2

Participants work on intervention projects in their honors teaching ("trying out an innovation").

Participants meet individually with one of the supervisors.

Meeting 2—8 hour session (9 to 5) in a conference center

(About two months after meeting 1)

Two more specific topics—chosen on the basis of expressed interest of the group (during meeting 1)—are presented by guest speakers. For example:

he has developed a more tailor-made approach to his students: "I stimulate them to discover and follow their personal ambitions and areas of interest, using the freedom that their program offers them."

— Creating a learning community
— Reflection and portfolio in honors
— Group / project work in honors
Ample time for questions, discussion, debate.
One round of small-group discussion about the ongoing interventions in the participants' own honors teaching practice.
Time for bonding and informal discussion.
Between meetings 2 and 3
Participants work on intervention projects in their honors teaching ("trying out an innovation").
Participants meet individually with one of the supervisors.
Meeting 3—4 hour session (1 to 5) at Utrecht University
(About six weeks after meeting 2)
Participants present posters about their interventions.
Participants speak in sub-groups about the learning outcomes of the course as a whole.
Discussion between course group and an external panel of experts (about presented posters and about learning outcomes).
Evaluation of the course plus informal gathering.

Many respondents report similar changes in their honors pedagogy as a result of the professional development course about honors teaching. Although teachers use different wording to make this clear, their answers confirm that the course helped them to develop more of a prospect view of the essentials of honors teaching and to incorporate this perspective into their teaching practice:

> I became more critical about the format of my honors seminars. . . . I reflect more on the honors program and feel able to offer students more freedom.
>
> . . . . .
>
> The course helped me to become aware of what the honors student is and what this means for teaching and learning.
>
> . . . . .
>
> I changed my course in such a way that students talk, discuss and participate more. For that I changed some assignments. I am more conscious of what is happening in class, I have a better sense of the nuances.

Another aspect of our work is the effect of the course on the selection of honors students. One of the teachers, who is also responsible for honors admissions in her department, reported:

> I have a clearer sense now of what characterizes the honors student. It is not just about top grades, but also about drive, motivation, about what they are able and willing to do. It changed my perception of honors candidates. What do they want to get out of their honors program? My ideas about honors students have changed, and so has my approach in admissions.

Many of the comments suggest that participants in the course have gained more self-confidence in their honors teaching and are willing to take more risks. Some of the comments were rather explicit about this shift:

> The course gave me more self-confidence and made me less inclined to plan everything in detail. I think that I already

> was quite flexible in my classes, but I found it scary. After all, I wanted to be in control. I feel confirmed that I was on the right track, but I did not do enough. Now I feel that I do not need to be in control all the time. I allow unexpected things to happen in class, and this is fine.

Some of the participants, mostly very experienced teachers, report that they have changed very little or nothing in their honors teaching because of the course but that they feel reassured and more firm about their ideas and practices. One of them phrased this observation as follows:

> I have learned how to look at honors. I interpret honors education in more positive terms. I see that this is useful for students: helping them to become citizens, to develop their leadership potential, to become judicious, to be better people. It makes sense to tailor opportunities for students at the top end of the motivation and ability curves. Not that I changed as a teacher. But I did change in communicating what I see as important. In the course, I recognized a lot of what we discussed about honors pedagogy, I recognized my beliefs, and I can now see this in a wider context.

All available evidence suggests that our professional development course about honors teaching has solid and meaningful learning outcomes. As designers of the course, we assume that this success is largely based on the fact that the course emphasizes important characteristics of honors pedagogy: challenging academic content, a degree of freedom for the participants to direct their learning, and the creation of a strong learning community.

PRINCIPLES OF HONORS PEDAGOGY IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH DESIGN

The remainder of this chapter explores to what extent the teachers themselves ascribe the positive learning outcomes of this course to these three components.

The first three honors teaching courses offered at Utrecht University jointly had 38 participating teachers (11, 14, 13 in each cohort). They were from all divisions of the university: humanities and social sciences; natural and life sciences and the medical school; veterinarian sciences; the division of law, economics, and governance; geosciences; and the two undergraduate honors colleges of the university. The standard procedure was that the participants filled in evaluation forms after the first and second meeting and engaged in an oral overall evaluation during the third session. The evaluation forms had open spaces in which the teachers could indicate what they perceived to be the main strong points and improvement points of any of the meetings. The non-directed responses reveal much about what participants see as key success factors of the course. The overall group evaluation during the third and final session was largely self-organized by the participants; therefore, it also provided spontaneous feedback about what the teachers see as factors that explain the strong learning outcomes of the course.

Moreover, we conducted seven in-depth interviews with teachers who had participated in one of the three courses. Part of the interview was about what in particular had inspired them most during the course. This element also provided non-directed and spontaneous feedback. During the final part of each interview, we explained our assumption that three specific characteristics of the course (challenging academic content, a certain amount of freedom for the participants, and community) might explain the course's success. We wanted to see how they would react to this statement. Their reactions are the only guided feedback that appear in the next section.

RESULTS

Community

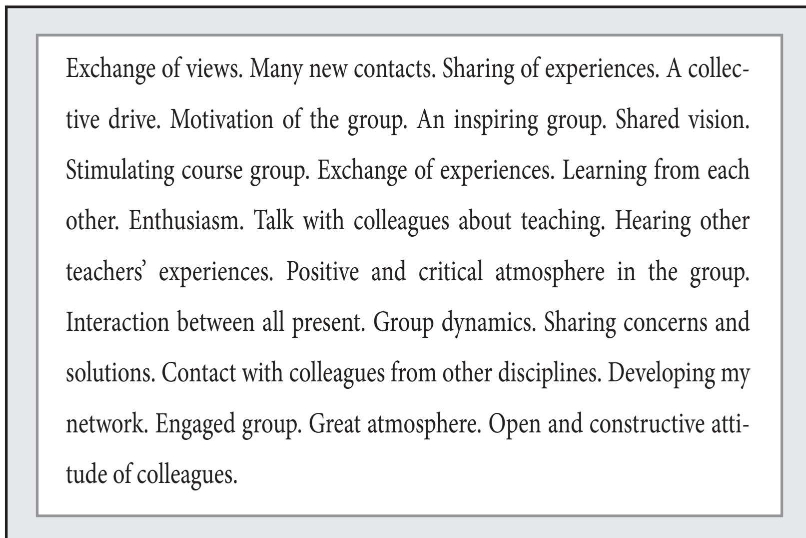
Sessions one and two of the three groups resulted in more than 70 completed evaluation forms. One of the open questions was

what the participants valued as the most positive aspects of the session. The results show that they particularly valued the course group (including the two course supervisors) as a learning community. Teachers mentioned this point in 44 of the forms. Figure 2 is a compilation of this spontaneous feedback about the learning community as the most cherished feature of the course.

The final evaluations of all three courses reinforce the notion that functioning as a learning community was an essential ingredient of our professional development course. The course was intentionally designed in a way that would facilitate the creation of a learning community. The participants had time and space for meeting informally and for small-group discussion. Moreover, the small group size (11, 13, 14 participants per course) and the interactive format worked out well. Most participants indicated that they liked to continue interacting with the group after completing the course.

The teachers who were interviewed all confirm how important the community aspect of the course has been for their learning.

Figure 2. The Honors Teaching Course as a Community: Some Feedback



Exchange of views. Many new contacts. Sharing of experiences. A collective drive. Motivation of the group. An inspiring group. Shared vision. Stimulating course group. Exchange of experiences. Learning from each other. Enthusiasm. Talk with colleagues about teaching. Hearing other teachers' experiences. Positive and critical atmosphere in the group. Interaction between all present. Group dynamics. Sharing concerns and solutions. Contact with colleagues from other disciplines. Developing my network. Engaged group. Great atmosphere. Open and constructive attitude of colleagues.

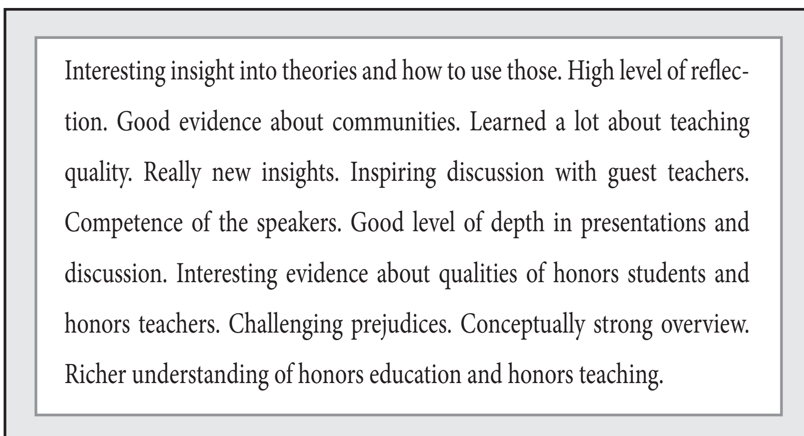
All of them indicate that their colleagues have been an important source of inspiration in the course. What they told us in more detail largely overlaps with the outcomes of the evaluation forms. (See Figure 2.)

Competence

Another component that spontaneously came up in the evaluation forms was appreciation for solid, state-of-the-art academic content, evidence-based approaches, plus critical reflection on course content. Such points were mentioned in 24 of the evaluation forms. Figure 3 shows some of the feedback that falls into this category.

The final evaluation panels and the interviews confirmed that the participants appreciated that the guest speakers were knowledgeable, open to debate, and able to present information based on honors research and reflective classroom experiments. The participants felt that the guest speakers and the course supervisors addressed them as experienced teachers and academics whose questions, criticisms, and experiences were welcomed in all the discussions. In one of the interviews, a participant commented, "It was important to get theoretical underpinning of various aspects of

Figure 3. The Honors Teaching Course as Academically Solid: Some Feedback

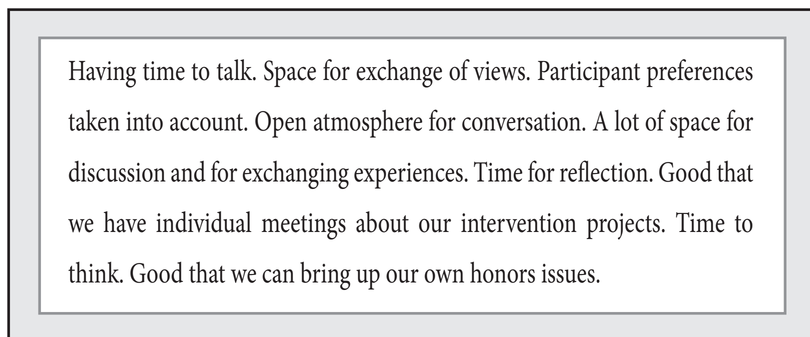

Interesting insight into theories and how to use those. High level of reflection. Good evidence about communities. Learned a lot about teaching quality. Really new insights. Inspiring discussion with guest teachers. Competence of the speakers. Good level of depth in presentations and discussion. Interesting evidence about qualities of honors students and honors teachers. Challenging prejudices. Conceptually strong overview. Richer understanding of honors education and honors teaching.

honors, and to discuss this with your peers." She added that she had liked the course format of "stepping out of your routine, go[ing] in depth, and [addressing] topics at an appropriate level." Another interviewed teacher stressed the importance for him to "be brought in contact with good and up-to-date academic literature about honors, to meet experts, and to study academic research articles about honors and related theories." The feedback from many teachers emphasized that it had been essential for them to link new insights to something practical, as they were supposed to do in their interventions (experimental changes in their own honors teaching, over the four- to five-month period between the first and last session). In this way their newly gained understandings became more rooted and internalized.

Autonomy or Freedom

Fewer teachers spontaneously responded that they saw the level of freedom that they had within the course setting as a strong point: 16 noted this element in the evaluation forms. Nevertheless, they clearly recognized that freedom was an important quality of the course and that it allowed participants to bring their personal questions and concerns to the discussion, to choose their interventions, and even to co-decide on priority themes for the second course meetings. Figure 4 captures some of the remarks that the participants made about the notion of freedom.

Figure 4. The Honors Teaching Course as a Space with Freedom: Some Feedback



The interviews made clear that the overall community atmosphere of the course, with its openness and time for conversation, helped to create a sense of freedom to bring any questions or concerns to the discussion, to suggest themes or approaches for the following meeting, to deviate from structured assignments for small-group work, to choose what to read from the reading table and the course materials, and to set personal learning goals. All participants had complete autonomy in deciding about their personal intervention, the experiment in their own honors teaching, that was part of the course.

Clearly, every one of the three design components is important. Community building creates the climate for learning from and with each other in the free space that is offered in the program. A good learning climate in which the participants act positively and openly and recognize each other's drive and experience forms the base for open exchange and reflection on the applicability of theoretical notions. Furthermore, participants are free to choose a project for the duration of the course that is challenging for them and useful to themselves and their department. For this, they seek theoretical underpinnings as well as input from the experience of other participants in the course.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Our initial assumption was that the three major design components of honors education for students—enhancing academic competence, offering freedom in what and how they want to learn, and creating a community—are also valid for professional development of their teachers. The results of this study validate the claim. The teachers who participated in our courses on honors teaching spontaneously mentioned these three notions in their answers to open questions in evaluations and interviews. Of these three, the positive effect of community on the learning process is mentioned the most. The participants value this component highly and recognize the components in the course format that constitute community building. The planned time for exchange was very valuable. Community building was stimulated by the engagement, the drive

for good education, and the experience in honors teaching that they recognized in each other. This phenomenon supports the belief of the Center of Excellence in University Teaching that considerable knowledge and experience within departments could stimulate further university-wide development of honors education.

Complementing the reported chief value of community building in the course was our design to offer participants the theoretical underpinnings of honors pedagogy and to challenge them to transfer insights to their own educational practice. This emphasis also created a valuable learning experience, and while freedom was less recognized as a design component, the participants reported that this aspect was still an important factor in their learning experience.

In this chapter we have studied the design characteristics of a professional development course about honors teaching for teachers of Utrecht University in The Netherlands. Although we draw our conclusions from one course format, in our opinion the results are valuable for other institutions that want to further the professionalization of their college and university teachers; the benefits of a course such as ours is made abundantly clear in Utrecht University's longstanding CEUT educational leadership course (Grunefeld & Wubbels). A design based on the three studied design components offers the potential for a broader implementation. Further research in honors and non-honors courses, however, can lead to stronger corroborating evidence for the positive impact of a course designed for university teachers with emphasis on freedom to discuss relevant subjects for their own practice, respectful collaboration among experts, discussion of evidence from theory, and engagement in community building.

From our experience in working with honors teachers, we identified comparable characteristics in honors teachers as in honors students. These teachers actively desire to pursue educational opportunities to remain current and to understand the needs of their students: they are willing to academically challenge themselves, they are flexible, they are creative in their educational practice, and they are willing to go the extra mile for their students. According to Reis and Renzulli, a definition of gifted students

includes the components of intelligence, creativity, and motivation. Scager divides these components into six factors of talented students: intelligence, creative thinking, openness to experience, persistence, the desire to learn, and the drive to excel. This similarity in needs and characteristics between honors students and their faculty could explain why the same design components in educational formats fit both groups.

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CHAPTER SIX

Building and Enhancing Honors Programs through Faculty Learning Communities

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Miami University

INTRODUCTION

Many important institutional concerns and opportunities, observes John R. Cosgrove, involve honors programs and colleges, such as their impact on undergraduate academic performance, retention, and graduation (Cosgrove). Another consideration for honors programs is the area of curriculum revision or enhancement, for example, increasing ethical inquiry across courses in the honors curriculum. Others involve inspiring faculty to create new honors courses, adjusting criteria for student requirements and recognition, initiating joint enterprises with liberal education and STEM programs, and advancing the role of the honors curriculum in advocating change across the institution. These opportunities beckon solutions that can be investigated and proposed by committees, task forces, and workshops. Colleagues involved in these discussions are

often part of an honors advisory group, those loyal members of the choir who have been long-term advocates for the honors program.

This chapter proposes a relatively new approach for addressing such opportunities or concerns. The process involves small learning communities of faculty across disciplines that can bring new faculty and diverse disciplinary perspectives into the honors curriculum and community. These learning community members can engage in year-long dialogue and action in order to propose, investigate, and implement new ideas and solutions. The members of such a learning community, which can include early-career faculty in addition to mid-career and senior faculty, may be curious about but not familiar with the university's honors program. Their interest in teaching and learning, however, when coincidently or purposefully connected to honors program issues, can bring new excitement, perspectives, and involvement. An example of such a learning community involving honors programs was in place in 2012–13 at Xavier University in Cincinnati. This faculty learning community (FLC), with the topic of "Teaching Honors/Scholars Courses at Xavier," had the following description:

> The goal of this FLC is to enhance the course-level and program-level teaching of honors students at Xavier. The FLC may consider how honors sections can become part of a common experience for honors students (especially University Scholars), regardless of major. We intend to look at the best practices at other institutions with successful honors programs. FLC members may visit and study honors programs at other universities; learn about how to incorporate new technologies into honors courses; discuss how to differentiate an honors course from a non-honors course; consider whether to propose common guidelines for honors courses; design or redesign particular honors courses that they teach; and explore other issues pertinent to teaching honors that the group determines. (Xavier University)

Xavier's goal statement of their implementation of an honors FLC is just a glimpse at how FLCs may be designed in an honors program

or college, a hint of how the concept is catching on in honors circles, and a more detailed view of Miami University's approach is offered later in this chapter.

Before examining the particulars of an honors FLC, however, the next sections in this piece describe the role community has played generally in the U.S., in higher education, and in teaching and learning as well as discuss definitions and aspects of this type of learning community.

THE POWER AND FRAGILITY OF COMMUNITY

Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, Elizabeth Beaumont, and Jason Stephens's comments about student community compel us to ponder why community in general is such an important facet of our pursuit of not only student but also faculty and institutional excellence in higher education: If today's college graduates are to be positive forces in this world, they need not only to possess knowledge and intellectual capacities but also to see themselves as members of a community, as individuals with a responsibility to contribute to their communities. They must be willing to act for the common good and capable of doing so effectively (Colby et al. 7). Equally concerned with the issue of community, Robert D. Putnam, in *Bowling Alone*: *The Collapse and Revival of American Community,* describes the decline of membership in communities during the last third of the twentieth century. He notes a decline of membership of 61% in the Red Cross, 42% in the League of Women Voters, 58% for those attending club meetings, and 40% in league bowling, which gave rise to the title of his book. Putnam cautions that loss of social capital—"the ways our lives are made more productive by social ties" (19)—could pose a threat to a way of life. Has this nationwide decline in community been mirrored in the way we teach and our students learn? How might this decline affect the culture of academic programs such as honors, departments, colleges, and universities?

With respect to the academy, in looking for campus community, Parker Palmer writes, "Academic culture is a curious and conflicted thing . . . infamous for fragmentation, isolation, and

competitive individualism—a culture in which community sometimes feels harder to come by than in any other institution on the face of the earth" (179). With respect to departments, in a national study, William F. Massy, Andrea K. Wilger, and Carol Colbeck found that collegiality was "hollowed," with community usually absent in meetings, curricular planning, and pedagogical work. Taking stock of such observations, John Tagg concludes, "One reason we deny meaningful communities to our students is that we, as college teachers, do not participate in them ourselves" (262–63). Such perspectives of higher education in the last half of the twentieth century suggest that Putnam's concerns about the decline of community in the U.S. are applicable to the academy.

FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Concerns about the decline of community in higher education during the last third of the twentieth century have fueled the design and implementation of faculty learning communities. During this period, universities in the U.S. almost exclusively directed their expectations, efforts, and rewards on establishing early-career faculty members as producers of disciplinary discovery scholarship while overlooking teaching and learning development. The three-year grant that in 1979 enabled Miami University to launch a new faculty development model, later called a faculty learning community (FLC), was awarded by the Lilly Endowment, a foundation that supported university innovations, including teaching development for early-career faculty (Austin; Cox, "Reclaiming," "Development"). The name "faculty learning community" was finalized in the 1990s, complementing Jean MacGregor, Vincent Tinto, and Jerri H. Lindblad's research on student learning communities, which showed that when compared with students not in them, students in student learning communities had a higher institutional retention rate, faster cognitive-structural intellectual development, and a higher level of civic engagement than their peers. Similarly, research on faculty learning communities has confirmed the same outcomes for faculty participants: higher tenure (retention) rates, greater cognitive development, and more civic engagement when

compared with faculty not in the learning communities (Cox, "Development," "Faculty Learning," "Fostering").

A faculty learning community (FLC), write Milton D. Cox, Laurie Richlin, and Amy Essington, is a "voluntary, structured, yearlong, multidisciplinary community of learners of around 6–12 participants (8–10 is ideal) that includes building community, the development of scholarly teaching, and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)" (1.5). The FLC engages in a collaborative, active program of seminars and professional development activities through a curriculum based on educational research evidence of best practices in producing significant learning; typically, the FLC curriculum is focused on enhancing teaching and learning or advancing an institutional cause. Sixteen recommendations for effectively designing, implementing, facilitating, assessing, and sustaining FLCs are listed in Appendix 1. These recommendations for FLC infrastructure are based on my own and others' forty years of experience with and research about the effectiveness of FLCs.

Two types of faculty learning communities exist: cohort-based and topic-based FLCs. Cohort-based faculty learning communities address the teaching, learning, and developmental needs of a cohort of academics who may have been affected by specific pressures in higher education, such as isolation, fragmentation, increasing demands, or a chilly climate in the academy. The participants shape the curriculum to include a broad range of teaching, learning, and institutional areas of interest to them. Examples of cohort-based faculty learning communities include early-career academics (one is now in its fortieth year as a major change agent at Miami University, with a new group each year), senior and mid-career academics, part-time/adjuncts, department chairs, and honors program instructors.

Participants in topic-based faculty learning communities design a curriculum to address a special campus teaching and learning or institutional challenge or opportunity; examples include developing electronic portfolios, designing or redesigning honors courses to address ethical issues, using mobile technology in courses, team-based learning, or redesigning advising systems for honors or other

programs. Such faculty learning communities focus on a particular topic and provide opportunities for professional development and for engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) across all academic ranks and cohorts.

Both types of FLCs generate positive accomplishments. Faculty, directors, and deans involved with honors programs may find the following assessment outcomes particularly relevant and valuable as an incentive to implement FLCs in honors. The outcomes are products of surveys completed by faculty involved in faculty learning community development.

1. In a six-university study by Andrea L. Beach and Milton D. Cox, faculty reported the top ten effects in rank order on student learning as a result of their learning community participation. All of these items are high on the Bloom taxonomy and are valued highly by faculty in honors programs:

    a. An ability to work productively with others

    b. Openness to new ideas

    c. A capacity to think for oneself

    d. Understanding of perspectives/values of course or discipline

    e. Ability to think holistically

    f. Ability to think creatively

    g. Ability to synthesize and integrate information and ideas

    h. Improved learning of concepts and theories

    i. Problem-solving skills

    j. Ability to apply principles and generalizations already learned to new problems and situations

2. When asked how they accomplished changes in student learning, faculty learning community participants cited the following teaching and learning approaches as the top five. These approaches reveal that the lecture approach has not

been favored in faculty learning communities. Again, the items enjoy a strong correlation with priorities in honors education:

a. Active learning

b. Student-centered learning

c. Discussion

d. Cooperative or collaborative learning

e. Writing (Beach and Cox)

3. Participants in faculty learning communities report the following top five effects of learning community participation on their educational development:

    a. Perspectives on teaching, learning, and higher education beyond their own disciplines

    b. Interest in the teaching process

    c. Understanding of and interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning

    d. View of teaching as an intellectual pursuit

    e. Comfort level as a member of the university community (Beach and Cox)

4. Faculty learning communities offer an effective program to work with faculty on developing the scholarship of teaching and learning (Beach and Cox; Cox, "Fostering").

5. Implementation science, developed by Dean L. Fixsen et al., confirms that FLCs provide the most effective faculty development programming model for implementing evidence-based teaching and learning interventions.

6. A study of early-career cohort FLCs at Miami University revealed that early-career faculty who participated in these faculty learning communities were tenured at a significantly higher rate than those who did not (Cox, "Development").

Another significant structural characteristic to note is that a faculty learning community is not a committee, taskforce, course, book club, or action learning set. Those structures may not include community building or development of the scholarship of teaching and learning. In contrast, a faculty learning community is a collaborative, small-group structure that supports community building and the scholarship of teaching and learning. In FLCs, participants can investigate and develop scholarly solutions to almost any opportunities or challenges in higher education.

AN HONORS FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY

In 2001–02, the University Honors Program at Miami University proposed, designed, and implemented a faculty learning community on the topic of "Ethics across the Honors Curriculum." This faculty learning community offered each participant the opportunity to investigate, discuss, and design a course in his or her discipline that contained a significant degree of ethical inquiry and could be offered for honors credit. The members read and discussed agreed-upon texts in ethical theory, practical ethics, and cognitive moral development. To revitalize their teaching, faculty learned how to develop and use case studies that raised moral issues. Departing from the typical FLC schedule of one meeting every three weeks, the honors FLC group had two-hour weekly seminars and attended two conferences, the Annual Conference of the Society for Ethics across the Curriculum and the Annual Meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. Each member planned to design an honors course that could be offered three times over a five-year period.

Learning community membership was limited to full-time, tenured, or tenure-track faculty. Applicants had to agree to teach an honors seminar in their area of specialty where at least one third of the course content would involve an examination of ethical issues, and they had to have written consent from their department chairs for their participation as well as a promise that the courses would be offered by their departments. The letter of acceptance—written by the faculty learning community facilitator and sent to members,

indicating plans and expectations—is in Appendix 2. Ten members were selected, representing the departments of philosophy; psychology (two); sociology, gerontology, and anthropology; computer science and systems analysis (two); teacher education; communication; management; and speech pathology and audiology.

The Miami honors faculty learning community received generous funding that exceeds most faculty learning community budgets. Each participant received at least $500 for travel expenses and attendance at the two conferences or other professional items of his or her choice. Also unusual was a one-course reassignment from a regular teaching schedule. This course-coverage cost was usually $2,400 for one course, and it provided time for the learning community member to participate in the community, complete the readings, and begin honors course planning. This generous funding was required because of the large time commitment that members would have to provide during one semester. The financial support for the development and operation of this faculty learning community was made possible in large measure by a program development grant awarded to the University Honors Program by Miami's teaching center, the Office for the Advancement of Scholarship and Teaching (OAST). The year before the faculty learning community was launched, this grant also enabled the University Honors Program to organize a three-day workshop on ethics in the honors program. The success of that workshop and the subsequent meetings and reading group held by its participants encouraged the University Honors Program to believe that faculty members possessed the wherewithal to develop a real curriculum of courses, each with a significant component of moral reasoning. Dr. Rick Momeyer, Faculty Associate in the University Honors Program and a member of the philosophy department, facilitated the faculty learning community and chaired the selection committee that was made up of members of the University Honors Program and OAST.

ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION

Assessment was done by using the survey adopted by all faculty learning communities at Miami University. The survey instrument

and entries for the honors faculty learning community at Miami University appear as Appendix 3. A quantitative comparison with all thirty-seven previous FLCs at Miami, both cohort-based or on other topics, is given in Tables 1 and 2, attached to the end of this essay. Table 1 compares the faculty development impacts of these thirty-seven FLCs and the honors FLC, and Table 2 provides the evaluation of the program components. The participants' open-ended comments appear in the survey document, which is Appendix 3.

Table 1 indicates that the honors FLC faculty development effects are significantly lower than those of the thirty-seven previous FLCs. This difference is in part because the honors FLC differed from the recommended FLC structure (Appendix 1). For example, the honors FLC met for only one semester instead of two semesters—the first FLC at Miami to do that—thus halving the time needed to create the results that previous FLCs achieved. The intensive pace and rigor of weekly seminars also contrasted with the usual meeting pattern of a seminar every three weeks. As one participant noted in Appendix 3, "The semester went way too fast and the time we had together flew by because of the intense conversations shared among us."

The meetings of the honors FLC focused on discussion of the readings from the selected books on ethics. The meetings did not provide time to engage the design and implementation of infusing ethics into the members' new and not-yet-designed honors courses. Here are some comments from Appendix 3:

- I really enjoyed our weekly associations and found most sessions extremely insightful. Would have liked more discussion of ethics pedagogy, but all in all was quite pleased.
- [B]ecause most of our format has been primarily reading and discussing, I need time to work with the material.
- I would like to see a session added where we talk about the practical nature of assessing students' work when they deal with ethical coursework.

With respect to designing and teaching their new honors courses, at the end of the FLC two members commented:

- We didn't really talk about this very much.
- It is too early for this to have had an impact yet.
- I need more practice, which I will do on my own eventually. (From Appendix 3)

Thus, the outcomes listed in Table 1 turned out not to be the focus of this FLC. For example, this FLC did not produce a research project, hence the low SoTL impact. The highest impact in Table 1, "Your view of teaching as an intellectual pursuit" (6.1), was a result of the challenging learning experiences involving the discipline of ethics.

Items 6–9 in Table 1 are low probably because these FLC members were seasoned teachers whose careers had already produced experiences that resulted in parallel impacts, as two members note:

- My interest was already pretty high.
- This is a new component to my teaching, but I have been integrating undergraduate with graduate experiences since I came here so do not expect a great awareness to suddenly occur.

With respect to the impact of the programming components, Table 2 reports that the seminars delivered the highest impact (8.6). Because this emphasis on seminars was the essence of the programming engaged in by the FLC, the FLC was effective in what it attempted, namely to teach ethics to the FLC members. The second strongest impact, "The colleagueship and learning from other participants" (8.0), indicates the success of approaching this University Honors Program project using an FLC.

The lowest programming impact reported in Table 2 is "The teaching project" (5.8), again confirming that the FLC did not have time to accomplish the objective of designing a new honors course involving ethical inquiry in one's discipline.

Item F in Appendix 3 reports the good intentions of the participants as they look to the future of designing and offering their honors courses after completion of the FLC; two FLC members note:

- At this time, I am in my thinking phase and have just started reading books that might pertain to ethics for inclusion in ongoing courses.
- Additional ethical components will be added to each of my courses and I am especially interested in finding interesting case studies.

Designing and offering honors courses would have been an excellent project for a second semester of this FLC. This unachieved goal confirms that FLCs should meet for more than one term. For a typical FLC, the first term involves learning about the FLC topic and designing a teaching and learning project to be engaged in the second term. The second term involves discussion of progress and fine-tuning as each member reports and receives participant support on project progress and outcomes. Also during the second term, the FLC members present the results to the institution. Given the amount of time required for (1) learning ethics, (2) designing an honors course with an ethics component, and (3) teaching this course for the first time, achieving these FLC goals offered the opportunity of a third term for this FLC. An FLC third term is rare because of the demand of faculty wanting FLCs on other topics and the limited resources of a teaching center. This time, however, a third semester was needed for the honors FLC to meet while the new courses were being offered, providing an opportunity for the members to support each other during their initial experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Recommendations follow for honors programs that are considering an FLC approach to developing honors courses, supporting instructors who are designing or teaching honors courses for the first time, revising existing curricula, and contemplating other program changes:

1. Contact the teaching center for FLC organizational advice and funding support.

2. Plan for having the FLC for at least two semesters and three if the time is needed to achieve the goals and objectives of the project.

3. Involve an FLC facilitator who is an excellent teacher-scholar and respected contributor to or member of the honors program.

4. Engage, and if needed, adapt as many as possible of the sixteen FLC recommendations in Appendix 1.

5. Adapt the teaching center's FLC assessment procedures and add ones that are particular to the topics and goals of the honors FLC. Using the Beach and Cox instrument offers the opportunity to compare the honors FLC outcomes with those of other FLCs.

6. Encourage honors faculty and staff members to join and participate in FLCs that are on topics of interest to but perhaps not directly connected to honors programs—such as new liberal education course requirements, information literacy, undergraduate research opportunities, and STEM issues.

Faculty learning communities offer honors programs an excellent opportunity for the educational and academic development of faculty and staff who align with the themes and goals of their respective programs. In addition, faculty learning communities provide honors programs with ways to involve faculty who are unfamiliar with the advantages and challenges of teaching and learning in honors courses. Perhaps most importantly, faculty learning communities offer honors programs a role in building community across the college and university, thus playing a part in enabling the institution to become a successful learning organization.

Table 1. Miami University Faculty Learning Communities: Assessment of FLC Member Faculty Development Outcomes

Results from the question, "Estimate the impact of the community on you with respect to each of the following developmental outcomes. '1' indicates a very weak impact and '10' indicates a very strong impact."
Number in parentheses is the ranking of this outcome over the years the question has been asked.
Number on second line is mean for that outcome over the years the question has been asked.

Outcomes (Number of years surveyed) Listed in order of impact across all FLCs listed here	Junior Faculty (20 years) 1980–00	Senior Faculty (10 years) 1991–01	Using Difference To Enhance Learning (3 years) 1997–00	Cooperative Learning (1 year) 1999–00	Problem-Based Learning (1 year) 2000–01	Team Teaching (1 year) 2000–01	Technology (1 year) 2000–01	Ethics Across Honors Curriculum (1 year) 2001–02
1. Your interest in the teaching process	(1)	(1)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(3)
	8.6	8.7	8.5	9.6	8.3	7.8	8.4	5.3
2. Your perspective of teaching, learning, and other aspects of higher education beyond the perspective of your discipline	(1)	(2)	(2)	(10)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(4)
	8.6	8.4	8.4	7.7	8.6	7.6	8.0	5.1
3. Your comfort level as a member of the Miami University Community	(4)	(3)	(8)	(1)	(6)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	8.0	8.1	7.5	9.7	7.3	7.6	7.6	4.9
4. Your view of teaching as an intellectual pursuit	(3)	(4)	(5)	(3)	(4)	(8)	(7)	(1)
	8.2	8.0	7.8	9.6	7.6	6.6	7.3	6.1

5. Your understanding of and interest in the scholarship of teaching	(5)	(6)	(5)	(1)	(6)	(9)	(3)	(4)
	7.9	7.7	7.8	9.7	7.3	6.4	7.7	5.1
6. Your awareness and understanding of how difference may influence & enhance teaching and learning	(10)	(8)	(3)	(5)		(1)	(9)	(7)
	6.8	7.4	8.2	8.4	N/A	7.8	6.8	4.4
7. Your total effectiveness as a teacher	(6)	(6)	(9)	(9)	(6)	(6)	(4)	(2)
	7.7	7.7	7.0	8.3	7.3	7.2	7.6	5.5
8. Your understanding of the role of a faculty member at Miami University	(8)	(4)	(7)	(11)	(9)	(7)	(8)	(6)
	7.1	8.0	7.7	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.0	4.5
9. Your awareness of ways to integrate the teaching/research experience	(8)	(9)	(9)	(5)	(12)	(3)	(9)	(8)
	7.1	7.2	7.0	8.7	4.7	7.6	6.8	3.8
10. Your research and scholarly interest with respect to your discipline	(11)	(11)	(4)	(7)	(5)	(9)	(9)	(7)
	6.7	6.4	8.0	8.6	7.4	6.4	6.8	4.4
11. Your technical skill as a teacher	(7)	(10)	(11)	(8)	(10)	(11)	(6)	(3)
	7.2	6.9	5.9	8.4	6.7	6.0	7.4	5.3
OVERALL MEAN FOR COHORT	7.6	7.7	7.6	8.7	7.2	7.1	7.4	4.9

Table 2. Miami University Faculty Learning Communities: Evaluation of FLC Program Components

Results from the question, "Estimate the impact of the FLC on you with respect to each of the following program components.'1' indicates a very weak impact and '10' indicates a very strong impact." Includes reports from those who engaged in a particular component and rated it.
Number in parentheses is the ranking of this component over the years the question has been asked.
Number on second line is mean for that component over the years the question has been asked.

Components (Number of years surveyed) Listed in order of impact across all FLCs	Early Career Faculty (20 years) 1980–00	Senior Faculty (10 years) 1991–01	Using Difference To Enhance Learning (3 years) 1997–00	Co-operative Learning (1 year) 1999–00	Problem-Based Learning (1 year) 2000–01	Team Teaching (1 year) 2000–01	Technology (1 year) 2000–01	Ethics Across Honors Curriculum (1 year) 2001–02
1. The colleagueship and learning from other participants	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(3)	(1)	(3)	(2)
	8.9	8.7	8.2	9.9	7.1	9.4	7.4	8.0
2. The retreats and conferences	(2)	(3)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(6)	(5)	(3)
	8.3	7.8	8.3	8.9	7.5	7.2	6.9	6.1
3. Release time (Junior, Senior) or substantial funds for professional expenses	(3)	(1)	(6)	(5)	(4)	(4)	(1)	(4)
	8.1	8.8	7.7	7.7	6.9	8.3	8.3	6.0
4. The teaching project	(6)	(5)	(4)	(4)	(2)	(2)	(3)	(5)
	8.0	7.7	7.7	8.1	7.4	8.8	7.6	5.8

5. Seminars	(4)	(6)	(4)	(3)	(5)	(5)	(2)	(1)
	7.7	7.5	7.7	8.5	6.2	7.5	7.7	8.6
6. Student associates	(7)	(3)	(1)	(6)			(6)	
	5.8	7.8	8.6	7.6	N/A	N/A	5.1	N/A
7. A one-to-one faculty partnership (Junior: senior faculty mentor; Senior: faculty partners in learning)	(5)	(8)				(3)		
	7.9	5.9	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.4	N/A	N/A
8. Observation of a faculty partner's and others' classes	(8)	(7)		(7)		(7)		
	6.8	6.2	N/A	3.0	N/A	6.3	N/A	N/A
OVERALL MEAN FOR COHORT	7.7	7.6	8.0	7.7	7.0	8.0	7.2	6.9

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APPENDIX 1

16 Recommendations for Creating, Implementing, and Sustaining Effective Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs)

1. Limit your FLC to a workable size: 8 to 10 (6–12 perhaps) faculty, professionals, and administrators.
2. Make membership voluntary and by an application process with department chair sign off.
3. Consider having affiliate partners: mentors, student associates, consultants.
4. Select a multidisciplinary FLC cohort, topic, goals, and membership;

   3 reasons: participant curiosity, rich innovations, dysfunctional unit relief.
5. Meet every 3 weeks for 2 hours for one academic year, and determine meeting time at the point of member applications.
6. Provide social moments, community, and food at meetings; an FLC is not just a committee or task force.
7. Make the facilitator a key participating member who models desired behavior and initially determines goals.
8. Have members determine FLC objectives, meeting topics, budget.
9. Focus on obtaining and maintaining FLC member commitment.
10. Assess 3 areas of FLC impact: member development, student learning or effectiveness of the FLC's innovation, and FLC components engaged.
11. Employ an evidenced-based, scholarly approach leading to SoTL.
12. Present the FLC outcomes to the campus and at conferences.
13. Blend online/distance FLCs with an initial and 2 or 3 face-to-face meetings when possible.
14. Include enablers such as rewards, recognition, and a celebratory ending.
15. Imbed an FLC Program into a Teaching and Learning Center and have an FLC Program Director.
16. Adapt the FLC model for your readiness and institutional culture.

APPENDIX 2

Letter of Acceptance Sent to Members

November 7, 2001

Louise Van Vliet
Speech Pathology and Audiology
Oxford

Dear Louise:

I am pleased to inform you that the Selection Subcommittee of the Committee for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching and the University Honors Program has selected you for membership in the Faculty Learning Community on Ethics for spring term, 2002. We are most excited by your application and look forward to your participation in the program.

You will need to be released from one course of your teaching time for next semester, unless you have made other arrangements with your department chair because of an already reduced teaching assignment. You should also be released from administrative and committee duties unless you wish otherwise. You need to make these arrangements with your department chair as soon as possible. Course replacement monies at the usual rate will be provided to your department should they need to hire someone to cover your courses. Your chair should finalize these arrangements directly with Milt Cox.

We shall meet for wine and planning (the two go together quite well, in my experience) from 5:30 P.M. until 7 P.M. on Wednesday, 14 Nov. I will send you more details about this meeting soon. In the meantime, it would be very helpful if we could prepare a booklet of applications to the community. This will be an efficient way to share background information as well as your plans for your proposed courses. Please email your permission to xxxxxx, CELT, at <xxxxxx@muohio.edu>. If you would like us to omit or edit part of your application, indicate that to xxxxxx. Please return your permission or revision by Friday, 9 Nov.

Please also complete the enclosed form indicating your contact information, dietary preferences, and second semester schedule. Be sure to list any dates you will be off campus for conferences, etc. I realize that some of your commitments may change.

Here are some dates to mark on your calendar for this and next term:

The Lilly Conference on College Teaching. The enclosed theme track list of sessions on Ethical/Moral Issues may be of interest to you.

Every Wednesday next semester, from 8–10 A.M. for our meetings and discussions.

January 30–Feb. 3: Third Annual Conference of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum at the U. of Florida, Gainesville. This is the conference for which each of us will receive $500 to offset expenses.

Feb. 28–Mar. 3: Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, Omni Netherland Hotel, Cincinnati. This is a conference for which members of our Learning Community have been offered a steeply discounted registration rate of $75 and which you are encouraged to take advantage of. We shall also endeavor to find funds for even this minimal expense.

Congratulations to you on your selection as a participant in the CELT/UHP jointly sponsored Faculty Learning Community on Ethics. I very much look forward to working with you next semester.

Sincerely,
Rick Momeyer
Faculty Associate, University Honors Program
Professor of Philosophy

Enclosures

cc: xxxxxxxx, Chair, Speech Pathology and Audiology
yyyyy, Dean, College of Arts and Science
zzzzzz, Director, University Honors Program (UHP)
Milt Cox, Director, Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

APPENDIX 3

Faculty Learning Community on Ethics Across the Honors Curriculum

Final Report and Evaluation Summary

2001–2002

Complete and return to Milt Cox, OAST by April 26.

If you are comfortable with the process, complete and return this report by email to <bartonm@muohio.edu>. As an alternative you may complete a hard copy and return it by campus mail. Before you begin, you may wish to review your application letter and the program goals and objectives as they appear on pp. 4 and 16 of the CELT Book. Your community coordinator and the university director for teaching effectiveness programs will review this report. The Committee for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, University Senate, and the Provost may review this report or an excerpt or summary of all of them as they plan for the future. Thank you.

A. Estimate the impact of this Faculty Learning Community on you with respect to each of the following program components. Circle the number on the scale below that reflects your judgment: "1" indicates a very weak impact and "10" a very strong impact. Also, if you have brief comments to make about any of the items, use the space provided. Open-ended questions occur at the end of the report.

1. Retreats and conferences. (N= 7; R= 6.1)

1	2(**1**)	3(**1**)	4	5(**2**)	6	7	8(**1**)	9(**1**)	10(**1**)
weak impact									**strong impact**

- The conference in Cincinnati was not very useful. The quality of the research was marginal.
- I went to two conferences, "Ethics Across the Curriculum," in Gainesville, FL, and "Association for Practical and Professional Ethics," in Cincinnati. I gained more from the Gainesville conference than the Cincinnati conference for the topics were more general; thus audience discussion was more spirited and represented a greater number of views. I felt both conferences helped me in better understanding the way in which philosophers think and identified ethical issues that I had never thought about before.
- The topic of greatest teaching impact for my future courses was "Social Responsibility and the Professional" (Gainesville).

- The topics of greatest impact on things I worry about on a non-professional basis were the panels on "Ethical and social issues of embryonic stem cell research" and "International conflict: The morality of violence and sanctions."

2. Seminars (Which topics/sessions were most helpful and/or interesting?) (N= 8; R= 8.6)

1	2	3	4	5	6(**1**)	7	8(**3**)	9(**1**)	10(**3**)
weak impact									**strong impact**

- For me, the readings from Glover and Hallie and the discussions related to them were the most helpful because they provided me with greater insight about ethical issues I worry about the most. The Hallie chapters and the discussion of the Children of Chabannes (my class and I attended this presentation after it was mentioned in the ethics seminar) were very beneficial for a class discussion we had relating this information to our discussion on Uncle Tom's Cabin.
- Our debate (including preparation for it) on the ethical issues to be presented at the ethics bowl was probably the most interesting session.
- Most Helpful: Ethics Bowl—Being asked to apply our knowledge, Davis article and discussion of Pedagogy. Glad to read Glover but he was tedious eventually.
- The seminars in which Rick led discussions of various topics in the area of ethics were a vital portion of this project.
- I really enjoyed our weekly associations and found most sessions extremely insightful. Would have liked more discussion of ethics pedagogy, but all in all was quite pleased.

3. Your teaching project, designing the ethics components of your course (your program-related initiative). (N=8; R=5.8)

1(**1**)	2(**1**)	3(**1**)	4	5(**1**)	6	7(**1**)	8(**1**)	9	10(**2**)

- We didn't really talk about this very much.
- It is too early for this to have had an impact yet.
- The program was very helpful in preparing me for designing a course. I am much more aware of additional topics to be covered; Rick served as an excellent model as a discussion leader. I met a speech pathologist and social workers at the Gainesville convention who will be excellent resource people.

4. Funds ($500) for teaching and learning support (N= 6; R= 6.0)

1	2(**1**)	3(**1**)	4(**1**)	5	6	7(**1**)	8	9	10(**2**)
weak impact									**strong impact**

- I guess that is what paid for my trip to Gainesville; I still need to submit hotel bills. At both conferences I ordered a pile of books. Money is always wonderful; however, the trips would have been worth going to even on my own money.
- It enabled me to go to Florida and I am glad of that, but I probably could have found funds to go anyway.

5. The colleagueship and learning from the other community participants (N= 8; R= 8.0)

1 2(**1**) 3 4 5 6 7(**1**) 8(**2**) 9(**1**) 10(**3**)

- Most colleagues were extremely gracious and supportive. I found a couple of the interactions frustrating, though. One member in particular seemed quite dismissive of others' ideas on occasion, and this really shut me down at times.
- I knew most of the other members of the group before we met. It was wonderful to meet new people and to hear discussions by folks I have already known.

B. In a similar manner, estimate the impact of this faculty learning community on you with respect to each of the following outcomes: "1" indicates a very weak impact and "10" a very strong impact.

1. Your awareness and understanding of **ethics in general and with respect to your discipline**. (N= 8; R= 7.4)

1 2(**1**) 3 4 5 6 7(**3**) 8(**2**) 9 10(**2**)

- I give it a 10 for ethics in general and 5 for ethics in my discipline. But, when I teach the ethics course to students in my discipline, I will be incorporating the general ethics 10.

2. Your understanding of and ability **to take your existing lessons, curricula, and courses** and include components related to ethics. (N= 8; R= 6.6)

1 2(**1**) 3 4(**1**) 5 6(**1**) 7(**2**) 8(**1**) 9(**1**) 10(**1**)

- I need more practice, which I will do on my own eventually.

3. Your understanding of how and ability to **teach students the skills they need to analyze** ethical considerations. (N= 8; R= 6.8)

1	2	3	4	5(**2**)	6(**2**)	7(**1**)	8(**2**)	9(**1**)	10
weak impact									**strong impact**

- Again, I need practice.
- Rick served as an excellent model, but my ability is not so strong.

4. Your understanding of how and ability to **diagnose the problems some students may have** in working on ethical considerations. (N= 8; R= 5.5)

1	2(**1**)	3	4(**1**)	5(**2**)	6(**2**)	7	8(**2**)	9	10

- I will be better than I would have been without the program.

5. Your understanding of what **expected student learning outcomes result** from your efforts to include and teach your ethical components. (N= 8; R= 5.3)

1	2(**2**)	3	4(**1**)	5	6(**3**)	7(**1**)	8	9(**1**)	10

6. Your understanding of how and ability to **assess the quality and quantity of students' work** with ethical components. (N= 8; R= 6.0)

1	2	3(**1**)	4	5(**1**)	6(**4**)	7	8(**2**)	9	10

7. Your understanding of and ability to **describe what you are doing and why in order to communicate to others** the nature and advantages of ethical components and **inform colleagues** of ways to implement these. (N= 8; R= 6.6)

1	2	3(**1**)	4	5(**2**)	6(**2**)	7	8(**2**)	9	10(**1**)

- As above, because most of our format has been primarily reading and discussing, I need time to work with the material.

8. Your technical skill as a teacher (N= 8; R= 5.3)

1	2(**1**)	3(**2**)	4	5(**1**)	6(**2**)	7(**1**)	8	9	10(**1**)

9. Your total effectiveness as a teacher (N= 8; R= 5.5)

1	2	3(**2**)	4	5(**3**)	6(**1**)	7(**1**)	8	9	10(**1**)

10. Your interest in the teaching process (N= 8; R= 5.3)

1	2(**1**)	3(**1**)	4(**1**)	5(**1**)	6(**3**)	7	8	9	10(**1**)

- My interest was already pretty high.

11. Your research and scholarly interest with respect to your discipline (N= 8; R= 4.4)

1	2(**2**)	3(**2**)	4(**1**)	5(**1**)	6(**1**)	7	8	9	10(**1**)
weak impact									**strong impact**

12. Your view of teaching as an intellectual pursuit (N= 8; R= 6.1)

    1 2(**1**) 3(**1**) 4 5 6(**2**) 7(**2**) 8(**1**) 9 10(**1**)

- As with many of these questions, the seminar was very compatible with my own perspectives and reinforced them, but didn't really initiate a lot new, except where I have indicated.

13. Your understanding of and interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning (N= 8; R= 5.1)

    1 2(**2**) 3 4(**1**) 5(**2**) 6(**1**) 7(**1**) 8 9 10(**1**)

14. Your awareness and understanding of how difference may influence and enhance teaching and learning (N= 8; R= 4.4)

    1(**2**) 2(**2**) 3 4 5(**1**) 6(**1**) 7 8(**1**) 9 10(**1**)

15. Your awareness of ways to integrate the teaching and research experience (N= 8; R= 3.8)

    1(**1**) 2(**3**) 3(**1**) 4(**1**) 5 6(**1**) 7 8 9 10(**1**)

16. Your comfort as a member of the Miami University community (N= 8; R= 4.9)

    1(**1**) 2(**2**) 3 4 5(**1**) 6(**2**) 7(**1**) 8 9 10(**1**)

17. Your understanding of the role of a faculty member at Miami University (N= 8; R= 4.5)

    1(**2**) 2(**1**) 3 4(**1**) 5(**1**) 6(**1**) 7(**1**) 8 9 10(**1**)

18. Your awareness of ways to integrate the undergraduate and graduate experience (N= 8; R= 2.9)

    1(**4**) 2(**1**) 3(**1**) 4(**1**) 5 6 7 8 9 10(**1**)

- This is a new component to my teaching, but I have been integrating undergraduate with graduate experiences since I came here so do not expect a great awareness to suddenly occur.

19. Your perspective of teaching, learning, and other aspects of higher education beyond the perspective of your discipline (N= 8; R= 5.1)

1(**1**)	2(**1**)	3	4(**1**)	5(**1**)	6(**2**)	7(**1**)	8	9	10(**1**)
weak impact									**strong impact**

C. If not covered by the above questions, what have you valued most from your participation in the Community on Ethics across the Honors Curriculum?

- Meeting Individuals with similar Interests.
- Diversity of disciplinary perspectives shared and the contact with colleagues I wouldn't ordinarily come in contact with. The facilitator was also a good role model.
- The opportunity to be the "student" with an excellent teacher like Rick.
- The chance to identify specific sympathetic colleagues with whom I might pursue endeavors with in the future: Karen, Jeff, Marty.
- The seriousness and commitment of my colleagues.
- Reading Glover; I wouldn't have without this prompting.
- The exposure to ethics as a discipline, mode of thinking and analysis. I feel as though a whole new way of thinking has been provided to me and am deeply appreciative of the authors we read, the articles we were exposed to, and the line of inquiry we investigated. Most of all I am indebted to the kinds of questions we pondered throughout the semester. The semester went way too fast, and the time we had together flew by because of the intense conversations shared among us.
- Rick was adept at facilitating the group and engaging us in thought-provoking conversations, intellectual pursuits along hard line, difficult topics that were not always easy to pursue. He always introduced us to a varying array of authors so that many different opinions were shared and different ways of viewing the world were put forth. This was particularly important as I set about putting together my own course and its contents.
- This entire experience was life changing for me primarily because I faced several ethical dilemmas with students this semester. Through course discussions, readings, and conversations, I faced these dilemmas in ways differently than I would have in the past with the experiences gained from this community.
- I've also decided to pursue a new research project because of this community primarily due to exposure to one of the authors we were introduced to and a

concept we dealt with frequently. I will be applying the concept of moral imagination as it relates to education, especially in the area of science education.

- The discussions, led by Professor Momeyer, prompted me to read further and to reflect on the issues that we discussed. I have already been able to use some of the results of that additional reading and reflection in my reading.
- Modeling of effective teaching by our facilitator.

D. What aspect(s) of the Program could be changed to make it more valuable for future participants? Do you have any suggestions for modification (additions, deletions, substitutions, restructuring, etc.) of the content or form of the Community?

- I would like to see a session added where we talk about the practical nature of assessing students' work when they deal with ethical coursework.
- More scheduled time to work on the teaching project. One less week of Glover, not Nussbaum.
- A couple of the participants added extra information to our listserv. This helped prepare us for further discussion. If this component was deliberately included more of us might have added to the listserv exchange.

E. In what ways have you used some or all of your $500, and how has this affected your teaching?

- Travel to a meeting on ethics; Useful, but not directly applicable.
- I did not receive any support from CELT except for partial support for 2 conferences.
- I used the money entirely to support my travel to AERA, in which I attended numerous sessions on ethics in education sessions. Several of these sessions are guiding my new research agenda with moral imagination in education. I also purchased several ethics books (with my own personal money while at the convention).
- It got devoted to the conferences, which was fine.
- I didn't get $500. Should I have received it?
- I may have used it up going to the conferences in Gainesville and Cincinnati. If not, it can be used to help buy the books I bought at the two conferences. See notes above for the benefit of going to the conferences. The books I am buying focus on ethics related to healthcare and are very beneficial.

F. For your project (design the ethical component and how to teach it), report your progress and indicate your plans for the semester you offer the course. At this point, when do you plan to offer the course?

- Some aspects of my design have already been used within an existing (non-honors) course. I, with a colleague, am now working on a new honors seminar. We fully expect to have completed a syllabus by the end of the semester.
- I will coordinate this with Al Sanders since we are working together. I will not teach it next year since I will be on faculty improvement leave then.
- Inclusion of components on ethics in introducing courses—at work on these components. We'll be included as guest spots in dept. courses.
- I plan on teaching the course next spring, 2003. The course is tentatively titled "Teaching Science, Society, and Ethics" and is geared for the Middle Childhood and Adolescent/Young Adulthood Educations majors. I've gathered readings and am in the process of designing the learning activities the students will be engaged in as part of the course.
- Marty and I are meeting in two days to work. I haven't done anything yet. I plan/am scheduled to offer the course in Spring 2003 as my WMS offering.
- Will offer course in Spring, 2004, and have selected some ethical stimuli and forms for analysis.
- I will be teaching our topics capstone course, SPA 413, second semester next year, Spring, 2003. The focus of my course will be on ethical dilemmas in working with individuals with disabilities. This fall I will also be submitting an honors course, SPA 180, to be taught the following year.
- At this time, I am in my thinking phase and have just started reading books that might pertain to ethics for inclusion in ongoing courses. Additional ethical components will be added to each of my courses, and I am especially interested in finding interesting case studies that can be used in my MOSAIC class this fall. My previous partner, my upcoming partner for the new year, and I will be meeting on April 26 for initial discussion on possibilities of case studies for inclusion in each of the main topics of the MOSAIC agenda.

G. Describe how your teaching and your perception of yourself as a teacher have changed (if they have) as a result of your involvement in the Community on Ethics across the Honors Curriculum.

- In the past, I have limited discussions on ethical issues in advanced undergraduate or graduate level courses only and had not considered it as a critical

component of beginning courses in our major. I have also taught three honors courses at the 180 level and never included discussions of ethics in any of them until this spring. Discussions, while in the community, have served as a wake-up call that it would be most appropriate to include such discussions in all of the courses I teach, thus serving as a more effective model for students.

- More aware of ethical component in my courses.
- I am reinforced in my pedagogy and purposes. I believe I am a very good teacher and have had that reinforced by my colleagues. I have had some growth edges supported.
- I realize I am much more sensitive to "unethical" behavior in students than ever before participating in this community. There have been several incidents this year where I've had to deal with unethical behavior in students, and I've been extremely hurt by their behavior and shocked that they didn't see anything amoral about their behavior. This course has only heightened that sense of morality in me.
- I don't think my perception of myself has changed except that I am now more knowledgeable about ethics and the teaching of ethics. That is due to the readings, the conferences, the discussions, and observing Professor Momeyer as he led the group.

H. Additional comments

- Fine experience.
- Rick, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your time, effort, and energy in making this community possible. The conversations were rich, diverse, and, most of all, extremely helpful in propelling us forward into a knowledge base that will serve us well as we develop our courses. I am also extremely grateful for the way you opened doors for me in terms of new ideas, authors, and arenas of thought. . . . These are gifts that are priceless and unexpected rewards from a community such as this.
- Thank you, Milt, for making this community a reality, for finding the funds to get it to happen, for supporting it, and for providing an area where once again faculty from all walks of Miami life can come together and share ideas, thoughts, and notions whose paths might not ever cross. For me, having the opportunity to hear the voices of individuals from marketing, psychology, women's studies, philosophy, communication, etc., all at once truly is a gift. With life in EDT, I feel I rarely am provided the chance to do truly "professorial" things, and these learning communities provide that opportunity. . . .

- So thank you, Rick and Milt. More than you know. Cheers, Ann.
- Thank you very much, please continue the efforts.
- I enjoyed participating, and it gave me a lot to think about. It is nice to have professional opportunities like this available on campus.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Honors Professional Development Portfolio: Claiming the Value of Honors for Improvement, Tenure, and Promotion

John Zubizarreta
Columbia College

All of us working in honors face a similar challenge when we are asked to account for the value of our efforts as teachers or leaders in our honors programs or colleges. Much of what we do is invisible to all but the most discerning and appreciative eyes: hours spent designing new courses and pedagogical approaches; advising students on curricular, career, and personal matters; coordinating faculty and student development opportunities; forging beneficial alliances across campus to grow and strengthen our institutional areas; collaborating with students on research projects; drafting grants and other proposals; maintaining alumnae relations; leading students to academic conferences; managing multiple databases;

serving on numerous committees and task forces; handling budget and financial responsibilities; playing a key role in recruitment and retention efforts; keeping up individual scholarly agendas; and—don't forget—teaching our own classes. How do we showcase the often unseen and unrewarded dimensions of our professional investment in honors when our roles are so complex that they virtually require a bit of madness, the ingenuity of an entrepreneur, the integrity of a seasoned professional, the enthusiasm of an engaged teacher, and the patience of Job?

Most of us work at institutions where the prevailing—sometimes only—method of evaluating faculty is a heavy reliance on student ratings. SETs (Student Evaluations of Teaching), as they are often called, are a valuable and appropriate component in any sound, comprehensive system of faculty evaluation, and the mounds of long-term research on student ratings, despite ubiquitous faculty complaints and suspicion, affirm the reliability and validity of such feedback. (See Abrami, d'Apollonia, and Cohen; Arreola; Berk; Braskamp and Ory; Cashin; Centra; Cohen; Feldman; Marsh and Roche; McKeachie; Seldin and Associates, *Changing Practices* and *Evaluating Faculty Performance*; Theall, Abrami, and Mets; and Theall and Franklin.) Frequently, when student ratings come under fire, the problems and failures are due not to the ratings themselves but to the ways in which they are designed and administratively used within flawed evaluation systems. Furthermore, relying solely on student ratings of instruction for information about the multidimensional complexity of honors faculty performance produces a narrow, incomplete, and simplistic picture of our work. Once we add to the picture the diverse initiatives, responsibilities, and accomplishments of the honors enterprise, we can see right away that we need a better tool for improving and documenting—if not justifying—our honors positions.

The honors professional development portfolio is a compelling process and document that effectively help us to engage in meaningful critical reflection about our roles, responsibilities, achievements, and goals. At the same time, it produces a strategically organized and representative collection of selective information that is tied to

a specific purpose and made coherent by a concise reflective statement of teaching and/or administrative philosophy. One essential factor for achieving the goal of producing an honest and comprehensive portfolio is finding a knowledgeable portfolio mentor who will keep the honors teacher, director, or dean accountable and focused on producing a portfolio that is consistent with the writer's purpose and core philosophy. The combination of reflection, mentoring, and the necessary evidence that illustrates and supports values and claims made in the reflective narrative portion of the portfolio results in a much fuller, richer, and more practical profile of our honors commitments for assessment purposes. Because a portfolio, by definition, consists of diverse artifacts or outcomes from multiple sources of information, it offers honors educators and leaders an effective means of documenting the many activities that define our work for personnel decisions. Of course, the chief benefit of portfolio development is the improvement that derives from its reflective and collaborative components.

The portfolio method of tying reflection to rigorous evidence and collaboration enables honors instructors and leaders to articulate and document a dynamic professional path that includes teaching, scholarship, service, administration, and more. No more invisible honors work! Seldin's earlier model of the teaching portfolio, which has evolved into his recent advocacy of the more inclusive "academic portfolio," offers a strong, proven approach for the honors professional development portfolio. Seldin's approach inspires us to think critically and strategically about the diverse components of our professional development and to collect judicious, selective documentation of our practice. With the help of a mentor, we can clarify in the portfolio how honors figures into our contributions to the professoriate and to our institutions. It provides a framework for our philosophy of teaching, scholarship, service, and academic leadership as a coherent vision tied to detailed, representative evidence for ongoing assessment and for evaluation and advancement purposes. In other words, the honors professional development portfolio is a vehicle for personal and intentional enhancement, meaningful self-awareness, performance evaluation, integration of

compound responsibilities, formulation of challenging goals, and continuous improvement.

WHAT IS AN HONORS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO?

The honors professional development portfolio is an evidence-based written document in which a faculty member reflects on, concisely organizes, and documents selective details of teaching, scholarship, service, leadership, and other professional responsibilities and achievements. Selectivity is important because the portfolio should not be construed as a huge repository of indiscriminate documentation but rather a shrewd, critical, purposeful analysis of roles, responsibilities, performance, evidence, and goals. It must be the kind of reflection and keen scrutiny of achievement and future directions that leads to genuine professional development, authentic assessment, and sound evaluation.

Most effective professional portfolios written as a wide profile of teaching, scholarship, service, and administrative efforts are about eight to ten pages of narrative reflection, complemented by a chosen bank of evidence arranged in supportive appendices. The explosive use of digital technology today makes the construction of portfolios even more interesting because electronic media allow us to embed links that lead readers and evaluators to increasingly more detailed sources of information. For instance, in a paper portfolio, the writer normally would add a reference to evidence in an appendix in a parenthetical note following a description of a teaching method, a mention of a syllabus or assignment, an analysis of student ratings, the claim of an award or some administrative success, or a summary of honors presentations or publications. Here is an example from my own portfolio:

> I have incorporated student-mediated midterm assessments, online threaded discussions, reflective learning portfolios, and other new methodologies into recent honors courses (see sample syllabi and assignments in **Appendix C**). Meanwhile, I have served as a first or second mentor to a number of honors senior projects, and I

have collaborated frequently with students in making presentations at regional and national honors and disciplinary conferences (see **Appendices F and J** for list in *Vitae* and details of faculty/student presentations).

In an electronic portfolio on disk or on the web, a link would open layers of supportive documents, audio files, videos, or other evidence. Each link could allow readers to move from one type of evidence to another to create a complex picture of one's practice, capturing information that might otherwise be lost in a less sophisticated and comprehensive review system. Overkill is, of course, a danger in any portfolio, especially an electronic version, reminding us of the imperative of offering a fair, representative selection of items, a task made easier by the discriminating help of a collaborative mentor.

Faculty are commonly held accountable as professionals for demonstrating achievement and growth in teaching, scholarship, and service—the fairly universal trio of domains in faculty evaluation systems—but each faculty member's profile is unique because of differences in purpose, disciplines, philosophies, styles, job assignments, institutional cultures, and other personal factors. Consequently, every portfolio has an individualized signature, and the information revealed, analyzed, and documented in the narrative and the appendix bears a unique stamp that personalizes the portfolio process and resulting product. For honors professionals, the signature quality of a portfolio is a special boon, allowing us to highlight and document the special dimensions of our honors careers.

Nevertheless, given the common standards for faculty evaluation in higher education, nearly all faculty professional development portfolios address, among other possible choices, the following seminal areas of professional activity, although arrangements and priorities may vary from time to time depending on purpose and external requirements:

- Statement of professional responsibilities (honors teaching load, advising, internship supervisions, thesis mentoring,

institutional leadership, leadership in honors and other professional organizations, coordination of college or community service projects, fundraising, data management, assessment).

- Philosophy of teaching, scholarship, and service (with a focus on how the three endeavors are integrated and interdependent, how each informs the others, and what difference involvement in honors makes to each).
- Strategies and methods in professional accomplishments (including reflections on unique approaches to honors teaching, research/publication/creative performance, and institutional/professional/community service).
- Development of materials for professional and program effectiveness (course syllabi, classroom handouts, online lecture notes and study guides, assignments, scholarly web resources, workshop exercises, databases, lab software, conference presentation slides, civic group/local school/college trustees presentation packets, assessment/annual reports).
- Products or outcomes of student learning, scholarship, and service functions.
- Evaluations of performance (student course ratings, peer assessments of teaching, annual honors program chair or college dean evaluations, sample reviews of research/publications/grants, letters of appreciation from institutional/professional/community sources).
- Awards, recognitions, prestigious appointments in teaching, scholarship, and service; invitations to present/publish in honors and in disciplinary field; keynote addresses and workshops; consulting or external program reviews.
- Improvement efforts, professional development, personal growth (especially valuable when framed within the context of the relationship between honors and institutional mission and priorities).

- Short-term and long-term professional goals, with projected dates.

The list of categories is suggestive rather than prescriptive, and each faculty member will adapt the areas to fit individual professional engagements and institutional requirements. My most recent draft of a professional portfolio addresses the categories above in my own fashion and strives to integrate the sometimes competing dimensions of my work as an honors director, a faculty development director, and an English professor. In the portfolio, I pull together my teaching, scholarship, service, and leadership in a narrative of eight single-spaced pages organized by the following table of contents and identified appendices:

Honors Professional Development Portfolio
Spring 2017

John Zubizarreta
Professor of English
Director of Honors and Faculty Development
Columbia College

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   C. Honors Course Materials: Syllabi, Handouts, Slides, Assignments, Exams, Projects
   D. Administrative Leadership Materials: Annual Reports, Assessment, Grants, Committee Initiatives and Minutes, Newsletters, Announcements
   E. Faculty/Administrative/Professional Awards in Teaching, Scholarship, Service
   F. *Curriculum Vitae*
   G. Presentations, Publications, Keynotes on Honors Education, Improving College Teaching and Learning, and Academic Leadership
   H. Consulting Materials and Workshops for Honors and Faculty Development
   I. Commendations and Acknowledgements from Professional Sources
   J. Faculty/Student Collaborative Research in Honors and Discipline
   K. Professional Improvement Efforts in Honors, Faculty Development, and Discipline
   L. Evaluations and Feedback: Student Ratings, Peer Reviews, Annual Evaluations, Professional Publications Reviews, Conference Presentation/Workshop/Consulting Feedback

M. Sharing Professional Insights and Recommendations: Letters Written for Colleagues and Honors Students

Regardless of purpose and items that individualize each portfolio, the narrative body of the portfolio offers a faculty member an opportunity to reflect on key questions that nourish vigorous, successful professional development:

- What are your clear responsibilities as a professional in an increasingly complex and demanding professoriate?
- How do you go about your complicated work to meet the challenges of your multiple roles in honors and in your discipline? What are your professional work strategies and priorities?
- What tools, materials, or devices have you developed and used to help accomplish your work effectively?
- What evidence do you have of professional expertise, efficacy, and vitality in honors and in your overall career path?
- How are your honors and other professional endeavors reviewed by others?
- What are you doing for continuous professional improvement and growth?

One of the chief benefits of portfolio development is that the process empowers the honors teacher, director, or dean to make visible how and why honors is a significant dimension of one's professional development and institutional contributions. Moreover, the reflective process at the heart of professional portfolio development mirrors the same process used in institutional strategic planning and assessment: we identify the mission or philosophy of the institution, we study how well programs implement the mission and goals, we examine evidence of efforts and achievements in programs, we see where improvements have been made or are needed, and we posit goals for the future. In a sense, then, honors portfolio development is strategic planning on the individual,

professional level. It is a comprehensive articulation of mission or philosophy, a current assessment of competencies, a statement of objectives, a map of how to achieve improved performance, and a bank of supportive documentation. Developed as a digital production in electronic media, individual professional e-portfolios can establish instantaneous, seamless connections with departmental and institutional assessment and improvement projects. This kind of planning results in clearer, more specific acknowledgement of professional purpose; better communication among faculty and administrators; and a more supportive, constructive, rewarding process of professional evaluation of our honors endeavors.

Most importantly, however, the honors professional development portfolio—whether on paper, on disk, or online—stimulates faculty to ponder an array of profound, value-laden *why* questions: *why* we teach in honors; *why* we serve as we do in honors administrative positions; *why* we choose certain priorities in teaching, scholarship, and service; *why* we publish in this or that field or in honors; *why* our evaluations are affirming or disheartening; *why* an administrative or other role in honors is a positive challenge or a frustrating drain; *why* a profession in honors education is a positive vocation or a routine job. The emphasis on reflection—on constructing not only a coherent, penetrating, meaningful inquiry into *what we do* and *how we do it* but also an essential philosophy of *who we are* as honors professionals—is a fundamental, critical process culminating in writing that has its own intrinsic worth in enriching our professional identity and clarifying new and satisfying directions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COHERENCE, UNITY, CONNECTIONS

The honors professional development portfolio must demonstrate explicit coherence among the various components of its reflective portion by exploring the connections between philosophy—the core of the portfolio—and the different areas highlighted in the narrative's table of contents. In the most recent version of my own portfolio, I reflect on the interplay between my values as a teacher and my work as a scholar, academic citizen, and honors

professional. In the philosophy section of the portfolio, the vital heart of the process, I begin by articulating a philosophy of teaching and how it serves as the hub of my entire professional career. Subsequently, I move on to use contemporary revaluations of scholarship and service to organize my thinking about how I try to integrate my diverse professional roles as honors director, faculty development leader, and English professor. Rather than separate teaching philosophy from scholarship and service as isolated entities, I borrow from Ernest L. Boyer's reconsiderations of priorities of the professoriate for the language I need to offer an integrated vision of my identity and purpose as an honors faculty professional. Here is an excerpt from the portfolio's section on scholarship within my personal philosophy statement:

> The professor must demonstrate competency and currency by actively engaging in the public, professional venues of scholarly publications and presentations at professional conferences. The *scholarship of teaching* is also a crucial dimension of change in higher education, and it should complement and enrich the traditional arena of disciplinary research and publication or the *scholarship of discovery*. Another appropriate expression of the professional work that validates expertise among communities of scholars is the *scholarship of integration*, an important aspect of honors work that spans across diverse functions of an institution and an honors professional's contributions. Such charges are crucial in fulfilling the responsibilities of tenure and promotion, and my portfolio offers abundant evidence of the central role of honors in my career path. **Appendices A, B, J, and K** contain additional comments on the integration of teaching, scholarship, and leadership in honors and faculty development. **Appendices G, H, and L** have selected samples of scholarship related to fostering a climate of professional collaboration and reflective practice on my own and other college campuses. With three recent books, several periodical publications and chapters, and numerous papers and conference presentations in honors education,

> faculty development, and my home discipline of English, I have tried to live out my view that such scholarly work is essential to my role as an academic professional with honors, faculty development, and disciplinary affiliations.

The philosophy component of the portfolio is heavily loaded with values and beliefs, the kinds of priorities that should drive the decisions I make about what, how, and why I teach; what kinds of scholarship, research, and publications I pursue and why; and when, how, and why I engage in professional development activities related to honors and my other commitments. In other words, philosophy prompts us to work from a mindful, deliberate center, helping us to locate our honors work as an indispensable facet of our professional identities: we become reflective practitioners and professionals. Because of the depth of reflection involved and the challenge of trying to connect *who* we believe we *are* with *what* we *do*, discovering and articulating an honors professional philosophy are often the most difficult steps in portfolio development.

In addition to tying philosophy and practice within the narrative, the portfolio must also bridge the personal and powerful reflective nature of the narrative and the concrete documentation in the appendix. The integrated references (or digital links in an e-portfolio) to various appendices in the sample excerpts I have shared provide a good example of how an author can connect claims and descriptions in the narrative to the hard evidence necessarily collected in the appendix. Both forms of coherence—A) unity of philosophy and practice in the reflective narrative and B) consistent, transparent connections between the narrative and documentation—are central to the integrity of the portfolio and to establishing a reliable base of information for both improvement and evaluation purposes. (See, for example, Zubizarreta, "Evaluating Teaching.")

PORTFOLIOS AND HONORS PROFESSIONALS: WORKS IN PROGRESS

Honors professional development portfolios, just like professionals themselves, are works in progress. We begin our professional

lives in earnest, eager to advance in our fields, ready to accept new intellectual challenges, and wanting to make a difference in our students' learning, our institutional cultures, our disciplinary organizations, our communities. As we navigate tenure, promotions, new responsibilities in honors or other roles, shifting scholarly interests, evolving institutional priorities, and the altered seasons of professional life, the portfolio emerges as a living document, changing with time in richness, scope, documentation, and complexity.

But in actual practice, the portfolio, even as it evolves, as a document, should maintain its succinct format. As new materials are added, old ones are deleted. In fact, one of the ways in which the portfolio comprises selective information is that both the narrative and the appendices are focused on relatively current accounts of one's responsibilities, philosophical values, methodologies, evaluations, goals, and other features of portfolio development. If the portfolio's purpose is specifically to reflect on and document only the honors portion of our overall practice or only one particular honors course or seminar, then the selectivity is even tighter (Zubizarreta, "Using Teaching Portfolio Strategies"). In any case, the end product remains consistently concise over time and multiple revisions. When I mentor colleagues in intensive portfolio development workshops designed to produce nearly finished portfolios, with appendices, in three or four days, I generally urge them to keep their documents confined to one or two-inch binders, never more. Of course, electronic media options open up an array of other possibilities for creating an increasingly sophisticated web of linked information, but one still should be careful about excess and about the lure of digital glitz over selective substance.

Professional portfolios do need periodic updates and revisions. I recommend a fresh reconsideration of the portfolio every year, perhaps at the end of the academic calendar. If one has taken advantage of the ready-made repositories of stored documentation in the portfolio's appendix, then finding new information for revisions becomes an easy task. Throughout the year, as new professional opportunities, assignments, achievements, bits of evidence, and insights emerge, the faculty member can simply store the items

in the appropriate section of the portfolio for later review. In this way, the portfolio remains current and dynamic, reflecting a vigorous, engaged professional career. Such diligence in maintaining the currency of the portfolio allows for timely selection of parts or versions of the portfolio for varying purposes, such as departmental or institutional assessment, supporting information for a grant proposal, tenure and promotion considerations, new position applications, or, when necessary, justification of the value added to one's career because of the engagement as teacher/scholar/leader in honors. A revised, updated portfolio is always ready at hand for multiple purposes, and maintaining its currency is relatively easy and obviously offers practical benefits.

One of the portfolio's often unrecognized benefits is that in maintaining its currency through diligent, active revisions, we engage the power of critical reflection to describe, understand, and, if necessary, defend pedagogical or administrative experiments that result in disappointing outcomes of our work. Without the current and contextualized information included in a portfolio, which is information that typically transcends the limited value of quantitative data in prescribed survey instruments, such attempts at innovation in teaching, scholarly work, or leadership may be viewed simply as failures. The critically reflective dimension of a portfolio can provide an analytical framing, with evidence of regular efforts to improve practice, that allows for multiple perspectives in making high-stakes summative judgments about our complex work as teachers, disciplinary scholars, and honors professionals. Keeping the portfolio current through revisions is an essential facet of the portfolio as an ongoing process, not just a print document or showcase electronic production. Through its dynamic qualities, the portfolio represents an honors professional who is dedicated to continuous improvement.

TIPS FOR MAINTAINING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

- Use the appendix as a convenient, self-defined filing system for hard copy or digitized information and documentation.

For example, the portfolio should have an appendix for materials such as teaching handouts, recent publications, or evidence of new professional service responsibilities or awards. As new materials are acquired in the areas of teaching, scholarship, service, honors leadership, or other areas, place them into the appropriate appendix or digital file for future assessment.

- Don't reinvent the wheel. If year-end self-reports are part of one's evaluation system, then combine the narrative revision of the portfolio and its assessment of quantitative information in the appendix with the required report. Don't let your honors affiliation become a burden because of additional, slavishly repeated work. Find ways of making required institutional assessment and evaluation activities integral dimensions of honors portfolio revisions.
- Focus on selected areas for enhancement. Narrow the scope of improvement efforts and the amount of information analyzed in a revision. One year, for instance, concentrate on teaching: identify one particular assignment in one course and the role of periodic, written feedback on the work of three students of varying abilities. Next year, work on scholarship: describe a new research and publication agenda and the challenges and achievements of reaching into new intellectual territory. Over time, the portfolio will become a living record of an engaged, vigorous professional journey without excessive demands of time for revision.
- Keep revisions detailed and specific. Conceiving of revision as a complete reshaping of all the fundamental components of a professional portfolio is intimidating and unnecessary. Rarely do we undergo such dramatic revaluations of philosophy and practice that the entire portfolio must be recast. Remember that the portfolio is a *process of continual analysis and improvement*. Revise deliberately, a step at a time.
- Take advantage of faculty development staff to identify areas for improvement and suggest specific revisions of portions

of the portfolio. Faculty development experts can introduce new modes of analyzing our practice, which may prompt ideas for revisions of the professional portfolio. In addition, many faculty development programs also offer support for research, publication, creative endeavors, grant writing, enhancement of academic leadership skills, issues of balancing career demands, and other factors in professional development. I frequently advocate that honors faculty, directors, and deans establish synergistic relationships with faculty development professionals in teaching and learning centers. The two-way benefits of such collaboration are numerous. Honors, after all, is a form of faculty development, inspiring colleagues to rethink and redesign course design, methodologies, assessment, and scholarly pursuits.

- Entrust a mentor to help guide the development of a portfolio through its various revisions. While collaboration with an experienced colleague outside one's institution is often best in the initial stage of creating a professional portfolio, teaming with a knowledgeable peer either from within or outside the academic department or the honors area can help create a useful perspective on the portfolio, which stimulates worthwhile revision.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIOS AND THE CASE FOR HONORS

The professional development portfolio is not the only means of describing and documenting our engagement, growth, and achievements in honors, but it is the only instrument I know that simultaneously helps us assess and evaluate our performance as honors teachers, scholars, and administrators; nourishes our professional identity and vision; and improves our professional work and influence through the process of reflection combined with rigorous assessment and collaborative mentoring. In developing a portfolio, we are empowered to think about a wide range of important concerns that affect our success in honors:

- The place of honors education in our professional priorities, accomplishments, disappointments, dreams.
- The choices we make daily to achieve our best work and to contribute to our institutions, disciplines, and honors organizations.
- The burdens and triumphs of finding integration and coherence among the diverse responsibilities of teaching, scholarship, service, and honors endeavors.
- The challenge of finding balance in our multi-dimensional professional and personal lives.

Such reflection and coached analysis of the evidence of our professional agency are vital components of professional success and personal growth, especially when we encounter pressures to explain and document our honors involvement and its value to our institutions. Going far beyond numerical rating systems or reductive rubrics, the portfolio's process of written reflection invokes the power of narration and contextualization, the ability of writing to make the often unrecognized dimensions of our honors professional lives visible and understood. In becoming reflective practitioners, we are more intentional in generating evidence of achievement, articulating improvement efforts, assessing the quality of our work, and making a strong case for honors in our professional careers.

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APPENDIX 1

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APPENDIX 2

Selected Online Resources

Innumerable resources on professional portfolios are available on the web. Here are a few useful sites. While they focus on the more specific "teaching portfolio," the information is adaptable to the honors professional development portfolio.

<https://cte.cornell.edu/resources/documenting-teaching/portfolio/index.html>

<http://ucat.osu.edu/read/teaching-portfolio>

<http://www.cs.tufts.edu/~ablumer/portfolio.html>

<http://www.washington.edu/teaching/teaching-resources/self-reflection-on-teaching>

<http://teaching.usask.ca/teaching-support/teaching-portfolios.php#About>

<http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/reflecting>

<http://electronicportfolios.com>

CHAPTER EIGHT

Teaching for Learning in Honors Courses: Identifying and Implementing Effective Educational Practices

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The only true voyage of discovery . . . would be not to visit strange lands but to possess other eyes.
—Marcel Proust, "La Prisonnière" (vol. 5), À la Recherche du Temps Perdu

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning are interesting endeavors. As faculty members, we spend a great deal of time working with students to help them understand a concept, a fact, or a point of view, but we often do not spend equal time better understanding and improving

teaching and learning. Time and again, individual educators note that they were trained in a given discipline, not in the process of teaching. In most states, it takes more credentialing in teaching to become a first-grade instructor in math than it does to teach a graduate seminar in psychology. Because of the assumption that those who are educated at the university level can teach at the university level, we give little thought to the extensive information and training needed to teach well. Many college instructors teach day in and day out without serious consideration of what constitutes an effective classroom. Essentially, a great deal of teaching is like driving a car day after day without learning about the features included with the vehicle or how best to use them.

That we could maximize the effectiveness of our teaching if we were to systematically, even if infrequently, work on the complexities of teaching seems plausible. The same may be said of student learning. Students study and work at learning with too little consideration of the actual process of learning. An interesting exercise would be to think what might be possible if faculty members worked conscientiously to examine and improve their teaching and helped their students to work diligently at learning.

Importantly, we must first note that a lack of focus on one's teaching or students' learning does not equate to educational malpractice. No accusation is being leveled at those who do not purposefully or systematically engage in such work. Rather, our argument is that it is common for the human brain to follow a course of action without ever thinking about how or why that course of action occurs. We may well drive our car without ever thinking about all of the subtle and specific skills required to drive the car. We may forget a critical step when baking a cake without realizing why we dropped the step. Likewise, we may try desperately to recall a phone number that has slipped from our memory, not thinking about why or how the information was lost. As with many human behaviors and cognitions, teaching and learning are not phenomena that we are automatically wired to think about in our daily lives. The question we propose, then, is this: How can we, individually, devote more time to critically studying the process of teaching and the complexities of student learning?

Although many of us are trained in our respective disciplines, not in the practice of teaching, we should not give up on working to improve teaching simply because we were not trained in that endeavor. Many resources exist to support such efforts, both in terms of centers for teaching and learning as well as a plethora of journals and books. The trick is simply to get started and maintain momentum while balancing competing priorities. Once one starts down the path of working on either enhancing teaching or helping students to learn more successfully, the existing resources and opportunities quickly emerge. This chapter is designed primarily to initiate the process of thinking about better teaching and better student learning and to point out some ways of beginning the work.

METACOGNITION

The human brain commonly engages in a course of action without thinking about the processes involved. This automation is valuable, preserving brain power for tasks that require concentration. In some instances, however, we may benefit from being more conscious of our actions through the practice of meta-skills. To better understand teaching, thinking, and learning, we must purposefully examine how we teach, how we think, and how we learn. Such critical reflection is at the heart of metacognition, which involves thinking about thinking or learning about learning (Metcalfe and Shimamura). To become better teachers or better students, we must engage the power of metacognition as an essential element of our work as instructors or learners.

John Dewey suggested long ago that we can learn more from reflecting on our experiences than from the actual experiences themselves. Metacognition is the ability to know when we know something, an essential aspect of understanding how we learn. Interest in metacognition has seen a dramatic increase during the past few years, primarily because it is an absolutely critical aspect of deep learning, the kind of learning we typically associate with honors and other higher-level educational endeavors. Neglect of such metacognitive skills leads to situations where individuals fail to understand the extent to which they know something. This is

of particular concern when an individual does not realize she or he does *not* know something, resulting in the prospect of being incompetent *and* unaware, a dangerous combination (Kruger and Dunning). When a person is unskilled and unaware, processing even basic levels of feedback can be difficult. Metacognition is critical in helping individuals to see both what is happening and what to do or what resources to seek out to do a task better. In other words, metacognitive practices lead to both self-directed and self-regulating learners.

When we think about this concept of thinking during acquisition of new information, that is, learning, we all know it is possible to read material and then suddenly realize that for an unknown period of time, no attention has been devoted to the words our eyes are skimming across. (Note: if that is the case at present, STOP, go back, and read this paragraph again.) We also know that sinking feeling of listening to someone explain something and believing that we are getting it, only to be hit with the sudden realization that we do not understand what has just been said.

When facing such scenarios, we assist ourselves and our learners using metacognitive strategies. First, for our learners, we must note that many strategies and techniques to improve long-term learning through metacognitive practice already exist:

- "Teach back": a standard in medical education whereby understanding and learning are checked right after something new is learned;
- "Quiz the learner": ask questions regarding a case to strengthen learning and check for understanding;
- "One-sentence summary": ask learners to describe in only one sentence the essence of what was just learned;
- "Muddiest point": have learners describe the detail that is most uncertain or confusing following a learning episode;
- "Set learning goals": before reading or learning, determine what will be learned or how many times through the flash cards it will take to memorize the concepts.

These are just a few ways to gauge understanding and help learners to think about their learning (Angelo and Cross).

We, too, as educators, can use metacognitive strategies to become even better educators:

- Take fifteen minutes after the end of a class session to jot notes about what worked well for the class session;
- Ask students periodically to write and submit responses to what they felt assisted their learning and what could have been even more beneficial;
- Have a colleague sit in on a class and note what aspects of the class seemed to go well and perhaps which ones need attention.

When using metacognitive strategies, no action is perfect: the goal is to become incrementally better through the process of thinking about learning. Working purposefully to improve at a task results in success. Simply doing something for a long period of time is no guarantee of proficiency. Sadly, doing something poorly for thirty years is certainly a possibility. That said, a total overhaul of one's teaching is also a daunting process. We are better off when we identify one area of teaching to work on and then move purposefully in that direction. This advice is as useful for teachers as it is for learners.

COGNITION AND LEARNING

Changing teaching practice to bring about better student learning, especially the kind of self-directed, reflective learning associated with honors education, can be a daunting, time-consuming endeavor. None of us has extra time to waste, and as a result we need to make sure that time devoted to enhanced learning through better teaching is as effective as possible. The good news is that a vast amount of information pertaining to the topics of effective teaching and learning is readily available. The bad news is a fair amount of junk science and strategies with no evidence to support claims also exists. One way to be efficient with a limited amount of

available time is anchoring pedagogical changes in good evidence as opposed to common myths. Here is a start. Following are three myths or suggested strategies without any empirical support and three strategies with strong empirical support.

MYTHS

Many well-known concepts about teaching and learning lack empirical support. Still, these concepts are taught and passed on to new teachers by well-meaning administrators, experienced teachers, or the Internet. Some of the following examples might seem appealing because we can relate to them and have heard them before. They make sense up to a certain point and might even improve teaching and learning somewhat. But the big drawback remains: little to no evidence supports these concepts, thereby assuring effective and efficient improvement of our students' learning.

The Learning Pyramid

The learning pyramid is an example of over-simplification of a complex situation. Basically, it attributes information retention percentages to learning modes. The claim is that we remember 5% of what we hear, 10% of what we read; 20% of what we see; 30% of what we experience as a demonstration; 50% of what we discuss; 75% of what we practice; and 90% of what we teach others. The pyramid seems appealing because it emphasizes what many teachers think: talking about something is the least effective teaching method, while engaging students will improve their learning. The maxim is as prevalent in honors as it is throughout higher education. Even though the concept is partly true, there are still very good reasons why we should stay away from the learning pyramid if we are serious about the integrity of the scholarship of teaching and learning:

1. No one knows where it really comes from. As trained academics, we should not use theories or models that lack original research but are instead circulated as citations or anecdotes with various origins/sources. Some hints suggest

that the learning pyramid goes back to Edgar Dale's "Cone of Experience" (107); however, it is also often attributed to the National Training Laboratories (NTL), Bethel, Maine. (See Lalley and Miller.)

2. It provides an overly simplistic model to represent the complexities of teaching and learning. Obviously, many determining factors affect the learning outcomes of our students. The means by which students are engaged with content is only one of them.
3. Such bogus models have the potential to discredit the scholarship of teaching and learning as well as the professionals working in the area of improving teaching and learning.

Despite such misgivings, the learning pyramid is pervasive in our educational systems. A quick search for the term "learning pyramid myth" in educational databases or the Internet quickly reveals the unfortunate prevalence of this misconception. Before perpetuating long-held theories or trying something new, such as experimenting with the flipped classroom or attending to learning styles, we should research the validity of an idea or the pros and cons of a method to uncover whether evidence supports the concept or practice as an innovation, a benefit, or a waste of time and energy.

Learning Styles

Learning styles propose that each person has a primary method that allows for easier or better learning than the others. Most learning style theories contain a type of assessment for students to evaluate which type of learner they are. The teacher is then supposed to use this knowledge to adjust his or her teaching activities to the preferred learning styles of the students in this classroom. The most popular learning style theory (Frank Coffield et al.) divides the style into visual, verbal, and kinesthetic. A common hypothesis for all learning style theories is that the teaching methods should be consistent with how students learn, a concept known as meshing.

The categorization of people into different learning styles is widespread for a number of reasons. People are curious to find out about themselves; they are interested in learning more about what kind of person they are. The various personality assessments propose, at least in part, to answer this need. A second reason is that learning styles shift the responsibility for learning outcomes away from the student toward the teacher. If the teacher teaches to the wrong style, a student's failure to learn becomes the teacher's fault. A third reason reflects teachers' observations of how individual students benefit from various modes of instruction. One student might understand a concept by looking at a diagram while another student by conducting an experiment, and a third by using equations and mathematical proofs. Hence, those students, we assume, must have different learning styles.

Unfortunately, research does not support the positive effect of teaching to a learning style. In a massive analysis of a variety of learning styles and meshing, Harold Pashler et al. conclude that no viable data suggest that meshing is beneficial. That is, teaching to a given learning style appears to have no benefit for one student over another. This is not to say that using different modalities when teaching is not effective; it can be extremely effective to teach using good visuals, kinesthetic activities, and stories (Nilson; Svinicki and McKeachie). The danger arises when students who claim to be visual learners indicate that they cannot learn from a given faculty member because the faculty member does not use visuals.

Left-Brain/Right-Brain Specialization

Similar to learning styles, this theory suggests that people can be divided into categories. In this case, the categories pertain to which side of the brain neurological processing is more pronounced. Left-brained people are supposed to be strong logical thinkers, whereas right-brainers are the creative artists. Even though our brain is divided into two hemispheres, the functions of the two sides are far more complex. Researchers have long known that language processing does happen more frequently on the left side of the brain and that the right more frequently processes information about the

outside world. But no evidence indicates that one side of the brain works independently of the other side or that individuals tend to have stronger neural networks on one side of the brain relative to the other side (Nielsen et al.).

What is often forgotten when individuals speak of someone being right-brained or left-brained is that significant communication transpires between both sides. The idea that one is more artistic or logical because of the number of neurons on a given side of the brain is a myth. Believing this myth might lead to a fatalistic notion of learning: if people are left-brained, then they cannot learn to be more creative. Just the same with right-brained people: they will never be able to understand math. A more detailed explanation of why such conclusions are dangerous assumptions for learners can be found in the work of Carol S. Dweck on the topic of "fixed" and "growth mindsets," research that has profound applications in honors education, where we often find both teachers and students who categorize intelligence, talent, and capacity to learn in sometimes limiting, preconceived ways.

EVIDENCE-BASED LEARNING PRINCIPLES

In contrast to these three myths, practices backed by empirical research exist on what works in the classroom to foster the deeper learning that is expected in honors and should be expected in all education. Following are just two concepts, each briefly explained and then illustrated with examples to give readers a glimpse of how research on learning can be transferred to teaching practice.

Testing Effect and Discussion-Based Practices

Many in higher education have long held that examinations and quizzes are an important method to determine the extent to which students have learned and can apply new information. Research, such as that by Henry L. Roediger and Jeffrey D. Karpicke, has also consistently demonstrated that testing can actually help students to remember information for longer periods of time, largely because of the repeated act of retrieval in the processes of reading

and studying. Individuals who practice recalling information are significantly more likely to remember the information when tested a week or more after the practice, which is why reading, a form of practice in retrieving knowledge, is significant in preparing for tests and learning. Reading assigned material results in encoding information, and repeated readings may well lead to additional encoding and more retention of knowledge. The trick is to design tests for learning, not just for temporary unloading of memorized facts. Exam questions should encourage learning at higher levels of cognitive development, asking students to demonstrate comprehension, analytical thinking skills, application of theories and concepts, and ability to connect knowledge across different domains of learning. Such testing goes beyond superficial recall and fosters deeper learning.

But practice at retrieval does not need to be in the form of an examination question. We have known for a long time that telling a story helps individuals to remember the story. Stories can change through the years with multiple tellings, but the root of the story is not forgotten. Therefore, having students explain concepts or issues to the class as a whole or to one another, much like telling a story, solidifies the information. Such strategies also suggest, in a larger sense, the value of discussion-based practices in helping students to retain information, in addition to the social benefits that may result (Brookfield and Preskill). Likewise, study groups, flash cards, and questions at the end of a chapter all help to develop long-term memory in learning (Nilson).

Engaged Learning

The argument that engaged or active learning is beneficial is not new (Bonwell and Eison). Nearly twenty years ago, Richard Hake collected data on 6,000 students and demonstrated clearly that interactive teaching for engagement results in better student recall of information as compared to lecturing alone. Over the past two decades, many researchers have repeated Hake's findings (Couch and Mazur; Deslauriers, Schelew, and Weiman). In study after study, researchers have noted that engaging students in the

learning process enhances the learning. In fact, almost by definition, all learning includes some engagement because learning with an absolute absence of engagement is not possible. The real discussion has been the value of the traditional lecture compared to the lecture with some form of student participation.

As noted in the previous section, practice at recall is a critical aspect of learning. Therefore, having students answer questions during a class session or break into small groups will likely have a positive effect on their later recall of information. In addition, knowing that one may be called on at any time increases attention, which is also an important determinant in learning. Overall, having students become more active participants in a class session has shown consistently positive outcomes in research studies (Michael). With the widespread push toward active/engaged learning, some have interpreted the data to suggest that lectures should never occur. In actuality, research, Michael Prince demonstrates, has shown that paying attention to the particular contexts in which we teach and learn, adjusting practice as needed, and using a combination of brief, focused lectures and a variety of active-learning strategies produce more engagement and recall in learning (Prince).

CONCLUSION

Competent, effective teaching requires an individual to routinely monitor and work at the processes of teaching and of understanding student learning. Teachers need to challenge how they teach every student; they must make a dynamic commitment to analyzing the problems they all face in the classroom and to coming up with solutions supported by the abundant research on teaching and learning.

All teachers should be scholarly teachers. Many evidence-based strategies continually emerge in our profession, but unfortunately, we also encounter many strategies without merit that draw considerable attention. We must distinguish one from the other and attain the knowledge of how to successfully implement well-researched, proven findings in our own practice whether we are instructors in honors programs or other contexts. We need to be mindful of how

research informs our instructional methods and work as scholarly teachers to continually improve our teaching and our students' learning. The job we have is too important to do otherwise.

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BREAKING BARRIERS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

COURSE DESIGNS AND CASE STUDIES IN HONORS TEACHING

CHAPTER NINE

Constructing an Honors Composition Course to Support a Research-Based Honors Curriculum

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As the research focus of postsecondary honors education intensifies, the honors composition course can be designed to support this mission by introducing students to discipline-specific research tools and argumentation styles while building an interdisciplinary community of scholars who can debate issues both within and outside their fields. Not only do students develop skills in selecting, reading, and writing researched academic arguments, but they also gain insight into the publication and presentation processes as related to professional development in a given discipline. Students learn how publishers and editors serve as gatekeepers of what is considered knowledge in a field, how researchers debate issues with each other in print, how publication timelines for various types of

books and journals differ, and why publication in scholarly and professional venues is important to one's career.

The course design presented in this chapter consists of several core components that help to prepare students for coursework in their majors and to retain students in the honors program by equipping them with skills needed for completion of later thesis and capstone projects. The introductory discussion provides a rationale for assigned papers and readings, followed by a sample syllabus (Appendix 1) and detailed assignment sheets (Appendix 2) used by the author.

I. **Core assignment sequence**: Students choose topics from their prospective majors and develop them through five major assignments. Focusing on a topic encourages students to identify and investigate current issues in their prospective majors and to gain familiarity with not only the venues in which their disciplinary research is published but also the elements of writing, such as organization, style, technical vocabulary, and format, used by published researchers in that field. Some students use this sequence as a springboard for future research projects, while others use it to explore potential majors or to change majors altogether.

   1. *Website Analysis*: Students evaluate a website they might use as a source for their final research papers. Criteria for thoughtful evaluation of websites can be readily found on university library webpages or in composition textbooks, and in applying these criteria, students learn to discern appropriate, scholarly sites from popular or fake news sites and from "Joe Blow's Nuclear Physics" site.

   2. *Book Analysis*: Close examination of a book-length argument allows for discussion of the time, effort, and resources involved in bringing a book to publication. Monographs by single or multiple authors provide the most useful insight into the ways in which lengthy arguments are crafted; anthologies are certainly appropriate sources for research papers, but they often comprise shorter chapters

that are closer to journal article length and may actually be reprints of previously published articles. Students can consult with their professors and major advisors in selecting key texts for analysis.

3. *Journal Analysis*: Most students are accustomed to locating individual journal articles through library searches, but fewer are familiar with the actual journals themselves. For this assignment, students analyze an entire issue of a scholarly or professional journal, including both content (article topics, writing styles, methodologies) and format (journal sections, editorials, advertisements, job postings). Students learn that journals serve disciplines in a variety of ways, not simply showcasing current research but also acting as a voice for a specific professional organization, promoting the organization's other publications and services, and providing networking opportunities for readers and members.
4. *Annotated Bibliography*: Students compile an annotated bibliography of a *minimum* of twenty items that are potential source material for their research papers. The student collects a pool of pertinent, appropriately cited resources from which to draw to write the research paper while phrasing the annotation as a summary to identify unique information that each source might contribute to the final paper.
5. *Research Paper*: Rather than simply writing "A History of . . ." something, students write final papers that identify and weigh arguments concerning debatable, discipline-related issues relevant to their majors. Many students are eager to begin exploring issues in their prospective majors or to continue research that they began in high school—as long as they are not recycling previously written papers verbatim. Some undecided students may use the assignment sequence to investigate potential majors, and other students may actually change majors during the

course of the research project. For honors students who bemoan having to take a first-year composition course at all, the disciplinary research focus can keep them engaged in the course, and all students can use the opportunity to become acquainted with library holdings, online professional resources, and faculty mentors who can advise them on topic and source selection.

II. **Supplemental readings**: Articles from the two NCHC journals, *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* and *Honors In Practice*, and from other sources on gifted education are used not only to demonstrate argumentative strategies (definition, narrative, rebuttal) but also to increase students' awareness of important issues in honors education, thereby building a stronger honors community and in turn improving commitment to and retention in the honors program and various honors activities, such as participation in regional and national honors conferences. Sample supplemental readings include the following:

Textbook Chapter	**Supplemental Reading**
Reading Arguments	Andrews, Larry. "Grades, Scores, and Honors: A Numbers Game?" *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* 8.1 (Spring/Summer 2007): 23–30.
Putting Good Reasons into Action	Weiner, Norm. "Honors is Elitist, and What's Wrong with That?" *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* 10.1 (Spring/Summer 2009): 19–24.
Definition Arguments	Szabos, Janice. "Bright child, gifted learner." *Challenge* 34 (1989): 4.
Causal Arguments	Welsh, Patrick. "The Advanced Placement Juggernaut: A Ridiculous Numbers Game." Room for Debate. *New York Times*, 20 Dec. 2009. Web. 10 Oct. 2012.

Narrative Arguments	Irwin, Bonnie E. "We Are the Stories We Tell." *Honors in Practice* 8 (2012): 17–19.
Rebuttal Arguments	Ashton, William A. "Honors Needs Diversity More than the Diverse Need Honors." *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* 10.1 (Spring/Summer 2009): 65–67.

III. **Article discussion**: Student pairs lead fifty-minute class discussions on brief, audience-accessible articles of their choice related to their research paper topics. The students leading the discussion gain experience in presenting discipline-specific topics to informed non-majors in an audience-appropriate fashion, and the class as a whole can practice debating a range of sometimes controversial topics, not simply those in their majors, in a collegial, academic manner.

IV. **Conference-style presentation**: Students prepare brief (ten minutes) conference-style presentations of their research papers. While many non-honors students can struggle with meeting a minimum time for an oral presentation, high-achieving honors students tend to exceed their maximum time. At our institution, however, students who are chosen to present their thesis material during the annual Senior Honors Showcase are limited to 5–10 minutes due to the length and logistics of the showcase schedule, so they have to make the transition from the hour-long thesis defense to a very brief presentation. This exercise introduces them to a strict time limitation and prepares them to be courteous co-panelists at state, regional, and national honors conferences.

Overall, this course structure has been successful for our institution's research-based honors program. Since the program's inception in 1999, approximately 43% of incoming honors first-year students have graduated from the program; for students who have taken this honors composition course, the graduation rate increases to approximately 57%. In 2006, in order to streamline

honors requirements and increase program retention, required honors hours were reduced from thirty to twenty-four, and select core courses, including honors first-year composition, were eliminated as requirements but would still count as honors electives. After this change, the program graduation rate starting with the 2006 incoming first-years did increase to approximately 48%; again, for students who took this course, the graduation rate increased concurrently to approximately 62%. Although multiple factors probably contributed to such correlations, we may assume that through immersion in discipline-specific university-level research and argumentation, honors students gain additional preparation for future undergraduate research opportunities, conference presentations, publications, and thesis and capstone projects, all of which contribute to active participation in and successful completion of a research-based honors program.

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APPENDIX 1

Sample Syllabus for Fall Semester

Course Description

This course emphasizes the types of writing that students will do in college and reflects goals of the Honors Program with advanced work in critical thinking and research. Prerequisite: students must have been accepted in the University Honors Program.

Course Goals and Objectives

In this course, you will select a topic from your chosen or prospective major upon which to base your essays and final research paper. Throughout the semester, you will develop argumentation and research skills necessary for university-level academic writing within your discipline.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

1. Faigley, Lester, and Jack Selzer. *Good Reasons: Researching and Writing Effective Arguments*. 5th ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2012.
2. *LB Brief with Resources for Composition*.

Course Topical Outline

Week 1

Mon	Class Introduction
Wed	Chapter 16: Planning Research; Chapter 17: Finding Sources
Fri	Chapter 18: Evaluating and Recording Sources
	Chapter 20: Documenting Sources in MLA Style

Week 2

Mon	Assign Website Analysis
Wed	Chapter 19: Writing the Research Project
Fri	Article Discussion #1

Week 3

Mon	Labor Day—no classes
Wed	Chapter 1: Making an Effective Argument
Fri	Article Discussion #2

Week 4

Mon	Critique Website Analysis
Wed	Chapter 2: Reading Arguments
	"Grades, Scores, and Honors: A Numbers Game?"

Fri	Chapter 3: Finding Arguments **Website Analysis due**
Week 5	
Mon	Assign Book Analysis
Wed	Chapter 4: Drafting and Revising Arguments
Fri	Article Discussion #3
Week 6	
Mon	Chapter 5: Analyzing Written Arguments
Wed	Chapter 6: Analyzing Visual and Multimedia Arguments
Fri	Article Discussion #4
Week 7	
Mon	Critique Book Analysis
Wed	Chapter 7: Putting Good Reasons into Action "Honors is Elitist, and What's Wrong with That?"
Fri	Chapter 8: Definition Arguments "Bright child, gifted learner." **Book Analysis due**
Week 8	
Mon	Fall Break—no classes
Wed	Assign Journal Analysis
Fri	Article Discussion #5
Week 9	
Mon	Chapter 9: Causal Arguments "The Advanced Placement Juggernaut: A Ridiculous Numbers Game"
Wed	Chapter 10: Evaluation Arguments
Fri	Article Discussion #6
Week 10	
Mon	Critique Journal Analysis
Wed	Chapter 11: Narrative Arguments "We Are the Stories We Tell"
Fri	Chapter 12: Rebuttal Arguments "Honors Needs Diversity More than the Diverse Need Honors" **Journal Analysis due**
Week 11	
Mon	Assign Annotated Bibliography
Wed	Chapter 13: Proposal Arguments
Fri	Article Discussion #7

Week 12

Mon	Chapter 14: Designing Multimedia Arguments Chapter 15: Presenting Arguments
Wed	Article Discussion #8
Fri	NCHC National Conference

Week 13

Mon	Critique Annotated Bibliography
Wed	Article Discussion #9
Fri	**Annotated Bibliography due**

Week 14

Mon	Conference Presentations
Wed	Conference Presentations
Fri	Conference Presentations

Week 15

Mon	Conference Presentations
Wed	Thanksgiving Break
Fri	Thanksgiving Break

Week 16

Mon	Conference Presentations
Wed	Critique Research Paper

Final Exam **Research Paper due—**Papers will not be accepted after the end of the exam period.

Assessment

Total Possible Points: Essays (4 x 100 pts = 400) + Research Paper (200) + Article Discussion (50) + Conference Presentation (50) = 700 points

Essay Format: Format all papers with 1" margins and 12-point Times New Roman font. On due dates, submit the peer critique draft and two clean paper copies of the final draft in a manila folder; your assignment will not be accepted unless you have all of these items.

Peer Critique Drafts: Providing a **typed** draft for peer critique days is required; failure to bring a draft results in a deduction of 10% of the possible points from the paper's final grade. Avoiding the deduction by merely not attending class is not an option. Electronic drafts submitted in lieu of attendance **will not** be accepted. Drafts must also be submitted to <http://www.turnitin.com> prior to the start of the class period during

which the final draft is due; instructions for <http://www.turnitin.com> access will be provided in class.

Late papers: I enforce the late paper policy stated in *Resources for Composition*: one grade (10%) lowered each **calendar** day an assignment is late. Your essays should be **typed, printed, and ready to submit** at the beginning of the class period in which they are due and will be considered late after the end of the class period. Printer access and functionality are your responsibility. Electronic drafts submitted in lieu of hard copies **will not** be accepted.

Article discussion: In your assigned pair, you will lead a 50-minute class discussion on a brief article of your choice related to your research paper topic(s). Select articles that have been published within the last three years. Provide paper copies of the article for each class member during the class period before your discussion day, and prepare a thorough, one-page outline of notes for your discussion (including the complete MLA bibliographic citation at the top) to be submitted at the end of the period.

Conference-Style Presentations: At the end of the semester, you will give a ten-minute presentation on your research paper topic. Edit your presentation material judiciously, retaining the essential organization and development of the key points to be used in your final paper. You will also provide audio/visual aids and handouts, the design of which will be considered in your overall presentation grade.

APPENDIX 2

Sample Assignment Sheets

WEBSITE ANALYSIS
100 points
Fall 20XX

Content
Using the "Evaluating Web Information" guidelines provided on the USA Library website, evaluate a website you might use as a source of information for your research paper. When answering the questions, do not use a magazine-style Q&A format in which you simply state the question and answer briefly. Instead, incorporate the questions and your responses into fully developed paragraphs, remembering to include transitional material when moving from section to section rather than jumping from one topic to the next with no connection.

Format

1. The paper will be 3–5 pages long. This means three *full* pages minimum and five maximum. If your paper is running either short or long, edit your text to fit the page requirement rather than changing font size, margin size, etc.

2. Format information at the top of the first page as follows, single-spacing identification information and double-spacing around the centered title:

Your Name
Website Analysis
EH 105-101
Date

Evaluating National Collegiate Honors Council
<http://www.nchchonors.org>

3. Insert page numbers in the upper right-hand corner of each page (use your "Insert" function rather than spacing these by hand), but do not use any other running heads.

4. Double space the body of your paper.

Evaluation
In addition to the Shared Criteria identified in *Resources*, I will look for the following:

1. Is the website related to your prospective research paper topic?

2. Did you answer the questions from the "Evaluating Web Information" webpage?

3. Did you put your responses into essay form, with an introduction, body, and conclusion?
4. Did you make transitions from point to point?
5. Is your essay at least three full pages minimum?

Due Dates

- Critique draft (minimum two full pages) due Monday, September XX
- Turnitin draft submitted by XX:XX on Friday, September XX
- Final draft due Friday, September XX

BOOK ANALYSIS
100 points
Fall 20XX

Content
Using criteria discussed in pages 64–65 of *Good Reasons*, write a rhetorical analysis of a book you might use in your final paper. You might consult with a professor in your discipline in choosing an appropriate or important book for your research project.
Pay specific attention to the questions in Steps 2 and 3:

Step 2: Analyze the **context**
Who is the **author**?
Who is the **audience**?
What is the **larger conversation**?

Step 3: Analyze the **text**
Summarize the **argument**
What is the **medium** and **genre**?
What **appeals** are used?
How would you characterize the **style**?

- Remember, one main focus of this class is argumentation, so consider carefully the arguments presented in your book. Do not write a book report that simply summarizes the text.
- When choosing a book to analyze, avoid anthologies, which are collections of essays written by a number of different authors, because they do not present one lengthy, coherent argument constructed by the same author or authors.

Format
Format requirements from the Website Analysis apply here: 3–5 pages, double-spaced text, 1" margins, 12-point Times New Roman Font.

Title:

Analysis of *Book Title Italicized*
by Author's Name

Evaluation
In addition to the Shared Criteria, I will look for the following:

1. Have you addressed the questions from Steps 2, 3, and 4 in your analysis?
2. Do you incorporate specific examples to support your own points?

Due Dates

- Critique draft (minimum two full pages) due Monday, September XX
- Turnitin draft submitted by XX:XX on Friday, October XX
- Final draft due Friday, October XX

JOURNAL ANALYSIS
100 points
Fall 20XX

Content
Using the criteria below and additional points we may discuss in class, write a critical analysis of the content and format of the most recent issue of a professional journal in your major field. Consider the *entire issue*, not just one article. You will need to use one of the university libraries or your department library because public libraries and newsstands typically do not carry the type of field-specific journals you will need to conduct university-level research.

1. **Issue content:** Analyze the writing styles and methods you find in your journal, and include summaries and quotations from various articles to support your points. Discuss article topics, field-specific jargon, tone, and other content-related features.
2. **Issue format:** Analyze the visual rhetoric aspects of the journal. Discuss journal sections, graphic devices within articles, advertisements, announcements, and so forth.

Online Articles, Online Journals
Many journal *articles* are available electronically through library search engines, but remember that you are reviewing **a journal issue in its entirety**. When reviewing an electronic journal or an electronic version of a print journal, remember that you must analyze content, which is similar to print journals, and format, which may not be. If the journal is available in web format rather than as a .pdf, use appropriate criteria for evaluating website format. If you cannot locate your journal online, or if you cannot access important but subscriber-only areas of the journal's website, then choose another journal or review a print version if available. Your honors advisor, another department professor, or a research librarian can provide valuable assistance here.

Format
Format requirements from the Website Analysis apply here (3–5 pages, double-spaced text, 1" margins, 12-point Times New Roman font).

Title:

Analysis of *Journal Title Italicized*
Volume, Issue, and Date Information

Attachments: At the back of your paper, attach photocopies or printouts of at least **two** representative pages of your journal, to which you will refer as examples within your analysis.

Evaluation
In addition to the Shared Criteria, I will look for the following:

1. Did you discuss the entire issue, not just one article?
2. Did you address both the content and the format of the issue?
3. Did you include examples within your text and refer to your attachments?

Due Dates
- Critique draft (minimum two full pages) due Monday, October XX
- Turnitin draft submitted by XX:XX on Friday, October XX
- Final draft due Friday, October XX

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
100 points
Fall 20XX

Content
Compile an annotated bibliography of a *minimum* of 20 sources that are potential source material for your research paper. The purpose of this assignment is to collect a pool of resources from which you can draw to write your research paper. You do not have to include all twenty in your research paper, nor are you limited to using only these sources.

Each bibliographic entry will be accompanied by an annotation, which is a brief descriptive and evaluative summary of each source—perhaps one to three sentences.

I will not require a certain number for each type of source (5 books, 5 journal articles, etc.); however, I want you to limit the number of websites you include to 5 *maximum*. This limitation focuses strictly on websites and does not include electronically published information from the library that you can find using a library database. For example, the National Collegiate Honors Council has a website <http://www.nchchonors.org> that I would list as a website; if I find a full text article from one of NCHC's publications, *Journal of the National Collegiate Council*, using a library database, I would list that as an article from that specific journal which I accessed on that database.

While collecting your source information, you do not have to read each source in its entirety, although the more you know about each source, the better you will be able to discern which sources will be the most useful for your research paper. Look for abstracts and full-text availability.

Format
- The first line of each entry should be flush with the left margin; all additional entry lines and the annotation lines should be indented.
- Alphabetize and compose your entries using MLA conventions.
- Within the annotations, write your comments in complete sentences.

Cover Memo
Attach a cover memo to the front of your bibliography that states your final topic choice. Memo format includes the following lines in the upper left-hand corner of the page:

Date: November XX, 20XX

To: Dr. Annmarie Guzy

From: Your Name [Note: by hand, sign your initials at the end of this line]

Subject: Research Topic and Annotated Bibliography

In the body of your memo, discuss your intended research paper focus. You cannot change your topic after this date.

Evaluation
In addition to the Shared Criteria, I will look for the following:

1. Do you have a minimum of 20 sources?
2. Do you follow MLA citation conventions?
3. Do your annotations contain complete sentences?

Due Dates
- Critique draft (minimum 20 sources with annotations) due Monday, November XX
- Turnitin draft submitted by XX:XX on Friday, November XX
- Final draft due Friday, November XX

RESEARCH PAPER
200 points
Fall 20XX

Content
Using the source material you have collected throughout the semester, write a paper that identifies and weighs arguments concerning the discipline-related issue you have chosen to research. Do not simply present information, such as "A History of . . ." something, but select a **debatable issue** in your field and discuss what various experts in the field think about that topic.

Cite at least five different sources within your paper to provide examples of arguments about your issue. Include quotations to support your examples, but follow the common recommendation that quotations occupy no more than 10 to 15 percent of your paper.

Use correct MLA documentation format when citing and quoting sources within your paper and when listing them on your Works Cited page. **Do not** use APA format—review the textbook to distinguish the two different styles.

Format
Formal outline: At the front of your paper, include an outline that adheres to standard Roman numeral style (spacing, indentation, parallelism of entries, etc.).

Length: The *body* of your paper should be a minimum of 8 full pages and a maximum of 10 full pages. Additional material, such as your outline, works cited page, and any appendices you may wish to include, is not included in this page minimum.

Paper format: As with all course assignments, use 1” margins, double-spaced text, and 12-point Times New Roman font. No special binding is required beyond a staple in the upper left-hand corner.

Evaluation
In addition to the Shared Criteria, I will look for the following:

1. Is the body of your paper at least 8 full pages long?
2. Do you identify *arguments* concerning your major-related issue?
3. Do you use proper MLA style within the paper and on the works cited page?
4. Do you cite at least 5 sources within the paper?
5. Have you plagiarized?

Due Dates
- Critique draft (minimum six full pages) due Wednesday, December XX
- Turnitin draft submitted by XX:XX on Wednesday, December XX
- Final draft due Wednesday, December XX

Papers will not be accepted after the end of the final exam period.

CHAPTER TEN

Growing Pains in Honors Education: Two Courses Designed to Build Community

Matthew Carey Jordan
Cuyahoga Community College

Honors programs and colleges that seek substantial growth face a number of challenges. Two of the most prominent are maintaining a strong sense of community within the honors student population and finding sufficient faculty to teach honors courses. A different, but not entirely unrelated, challenge is presented by part-time students, some of whom may be excellent candidates for honors but whose outside commitments make it impossible for them to carry a full course load or regularly attend classes during business hours. In what follows, I will provide an overview of two honors courses whose design can help meet the two primary challenges, while the description of the second course also addresses ways to eliminate obstacles in welcoming and retaining part-time students. Both courses have been developed at Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM), a regional comprehensive university with a substantial number of first-generation, commuter, and part-time

students and an honors program in the midst of a five-year plan to grow from forty to approximately 150 students.

COURSE #1:
SOMETIMES BIGGER REALLY IS BETTER

One of the strengths of an honors community composed of just a few dozen students is that it is fairly easy for everyone to know each other. First-year students routinely mingle with upper-class students, friendships are built, and networks are formed—frequently without any intentional efforts on the part of administrators. It just happens. This phenomenon was certainly our experience at AUM, where, for several years, only one honors seminar could be offered per semester. With students needing six such seminars to graduate from the honors program, inevitably our courses would feature a healthy mix of students at all levels.

When we began to offer two or more seminars each semester, the dynamics changed. Like the curricula of many honors programs, ours included courses at the first-year, sophomore, and junior levels, and the first-year-level courses satisfy a different requirement in the university's core curriculum than the sophomore- and junior-level courses. In practice, running multiple seminars meant that first-year students would never, or almost never, interact with a sophomore or junior in their honors classes and that the sense of community and comradery that had been a defining characteristic of the AUM honors program was now more difficult to achieve.

In response, honors faculty at AUM experimented with a new approach in the spring 2017 semester. Flexibility in the content of our curriculum made it possible to use the same set of core readings—a humanities anthology titled *Being Human*, edited by Leon Kass—in both the sophomore seminar (HONR 2757) and the freshman seminar (HONR 1757). Separate syllabi were created for the two classes, reflecting that HONR 1757 is intended to emphasize breadth and to replace the standard freshman composition sequence at AUM, while HONR 2757 is intended to emphasize depth and substitute for a core curriculum humanities course.

Both syllabi stressed group work, and the classes were scheduled to meet at the same time. One of classes was assigned to a large classroom capable of seating sixty people. The other was assigned to a smaller classroom just down the hall. Our first few meetings were held jointly: fifty-two students and four faculty all assembled in the larger of the two rooms. Among other things, this arrangement gave the faculty an opportunity to explain and model as a team how the mechanics of the two courses would work. During the third class meeting, the four instructors participated in a faculty fishbowl.

For the first two-thirds of the semester, HONR 1757 and HONR 2757 utilized the same calendar. Three class meetings were devoted to discussing each of six chapters selected from our textbook, and students in both sections were required to write short reflection essays on each topic prior to our in-class discussions. Each time we moved from one chapter in the textbook to another, students were assigned to a new small group of four to six people. Roughly half of the groups would be sent to the second of the two classrooms, and students in both rooms spent most of the class period discussing each other's work and the themes of the assigned chapter. The four professors—a biologist, a counselor, a philosopher, and a specialist in Victorian literature—occasionally gave brief mini-lectures on salient topics, but they served primarily as *ad hoc* members of the students' groups, moving from one to another and participating in the conversations as appropriate.

The most interesting aspect of the course proved to be the group work that was produced. In addition to engaging in peer review, each of the small groups was required to submit a packet of materials that included rough and final drafts of each member's reading journal as well as a synthesis of the group's discussions. These syntheses took an extraordinarily wide array of forms, from traditional essays to jigsaw puzzles and music videos. Here are the instructions (to speak generously) and assessment criteria that were provided:

> What should a group submission look like in this course? It's hard to say. But here are some things your professors will have in mind, based on your suggestions. . . .[1]

An HONR 1757/2757 group project that merits an 'A'

- is well-organized; it's easy for the person grading it to figure out how it's been assembled; the various components fit together in a clear and natural way
- is nice to look at
- includes polished, well-edited, aesthetically pleasing, and grammatically correct summaries, overviews, or transcripts of the group's discussions
- demonstrates that each member of the group contributed, and that each individual's ideas were taken seriously; it's obvious that rough drafts of reading journals were a principal topic of discussion
- reveals original, thought-provoking, and occasionally box-up-blowing[2] insights into the assigned material, perhaps expressed in a medium other than prose
- includes serious discussion of multiple points of view concerning a range of topics
- probably shows that the group members made thoughtful text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections; 'A' submissions frequently include citations of sources beyond our textbook
- makes it clear that the group functioned effectively as a team

Every student in each group played a distinct role: boss, scribe, editor, commentator, or "red shirt." (A red shirt is a person with no particular responsibilities; the label was chosen as a nod to both the nameless members of the *Enterprise* crew on *Star Trek* and to the stars-in-waiting of college football.) The expectation was that each student in the class would play each of these roles at least once during the semester, but that was not a strict requirement.[3]

As noted above, the principal rationale for combining the two sections and for placing such a strong emphasis on group work was to encourage students to get to know people with whom they might

not otherwise have engaged. Overstating how successful we were in achieving this goal would be difficult. Concurrently, the course merger and group projects helped fulfill several of our program's learning outcomes. New honors students had valuable opportunities to learn from veterans of the program and to cultivate their creative-thinking skills, and everyone enrolled in the course spent substantial time as a member or leader of a team.

A secondary, and unexpected, benefit of this approach is that it provided an effective strategy for stretching faculty resources. In general, AUM honors seminars have a student-to-faculty ratio of 10:1 or lower. With fifty-two students and four professors, the HONR 1757/2757 course described here was slightly above this target (13:1). One upshot of the course design is that the ratio actually felt much lower; the amount of time spent in small groups enabled the faculty members to engage with students in greater depth (albeit for shorter stretches of time) than would have been possible otherwise. The more of this interaction, the better, of course; adding a fifth or even a sixth professor to HONR 1757/2757 would only have enhanced the experience. Pragmatically speaking, however, just two faculty members could have managed the course effectively. Indeed, with a sufficiently large space in which to meet, it would not be out of the question for one professor to do satisfactory work in an honors mega-seminar organized in this fashion. Although that arrangement would be far from ideal, and perhaps not sustainable over the long haul, it could work when emergency course-staffing situations arise.

COURSE #2: FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES, ROBUST ENGAGEMENT

The HONR 1757/2757 course just described was developed in response to concerns over how to incorporate a significant number of new students into an existing honors community. A different, but not unrelated, challenge is posed by students who are honors-eligible but cannot take a full-time course load during a particular semester (or even for a year or more) because of outside commitments. If students' outside commitments include a full-time job, attending

classes scheduled in the middle of the day may be impossible for them, exacerbating the problem. At many institutions, including AUM, such students can often make progress toward honors graduation by converting traditional and evening courses into contract courses to earn honors credit, but those students may not have any interaction with their honors peers in an academic context.

One opportunity for these students to build relationships with other honors students is taking the Honors Colloquium (HONR 1957), which is a one-credit hour, pass/fail course. This course is frequently taught by university administrators and leaders with whom our students might not otherwise have an opportunity to interact, although in some incarnations members of our Fine Arts faculty teach the class. A section of HONR 1957 can take any of three forms: a "cultural experiences" course in which students attend concerts, plays, museums, and the like (hence the connection to Fine Arts); a service-learning course; or a "book-of-the-month club" course, in which the instructor of record selects between two and five works that he or she believes to be particularly interesting, important, or otherwise worthwhile.

When taught by a high-level administrator, such as our university's chancellor, the vice-chancellor for strategic initiatives, an associate provost, or one of the deans, HONR 1957 gives all of the students enrolled a unique opportunity to engage with institutional leaders and gain a deeper understanding of the university as a whole. For present purposes, what is important to note is the particular advantage for part-time students: these courses usually meet just six to ten times per semester, and those meetings are frequently scheduled on a flexible basis to accommodate as many members of the class as possible. In cultural experience-based sections of the course, instructors typically identify eight events, and each student must attend four of them plus four lecture/discussion meetings. In the service-learning courses, projects are typically scheduled outside of regular business hours; only a few class meetings are held for purposes of planning and assessment. And in book-of-the-month club sections, participants meet roughly twice a month, sometimes over a meal, to discuss the material they have been reading. In this iteration a student who enrolls in the course will have a traditional

honors academic experience and will interact in meaningful ways with fellow honors students, but orchestrated in a manner that is compatible with the demands imposed by a family, career, or other extracurricular commitments. The scenario, of course, is not ideal; no one would dispute that taking as many genuine honors courses as possible is better for an honors student. For students without that option, however, the honors colloquium represents a satisfactory compromise between the alternatives of all or nothing.

THE BENEFITS OF SUCCESS

The creative approaches of HONR 1757/2757 and HONR 1957 in the AUM honors curriculum have helped the program solve the challenges of building and maintaining community, staffing honors courses with engaged instructors, and providing opportunities for part-time students to be vital members of the program. The courses have been strong, welcome additions to the array of opportunities we offer our honors students.

NOTES

[1]The very first group project of the semester required the students to develop proposals for what the assessment criteria would be.

[2]This is not a typo; it merits some explaining. The unofficial slogan of the AUM Honors Program, coined by retired director Donald Nobles, is "Some people think outside the box; we blow the box up." The language of "box-up-blowing" has thereby entered our lexicon.

[3]Together, the students' reading journals (35%) and group submissions (20%) represented 55% of their course grades. Other assignments included a "textless response" to an assigned reading and a substantive term paper, but neither of these is connected in any important way to the merging of two sections, so they are not discussed here.

WORK CITED

Kass, Leon, editor. *Being Human*. Norton, 2004.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

HON 315: Perspectives on Twentieth-Century American Identity

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University of Illinois-Springfield

At Southern Oregon University, a course designated as HON 315: Perspectives on Twentieth-Century American Identity has been developed and offered with a high degree of success for several terms. Its pedagogical flexibility, high level of student participation, and exceptionally high course-evaluation ratings from students indicate that it might serve as a useful model for honors programs and colleges as a lower-level honors course in United States history or perhaps adapted to other disciplines. The course description is as follows:

> This course is a study of the development of the United States in the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, focusing on the evolution of American identity, society, and culture. Throughout the term, the course progresses

> sequentially, examining specific years as focal points for comparative analysis. The criteria for selecting particular years are subjective, based on the instructor's choices, but not random. The twenty years, designated as focal points, represent pivotal moments in larger movements and trends involving race, class, and gender; the development of advertising and consumer culture; the emergence and evolution of mass popular culture; the onset of major social movements, especially those in pursuit of civil rights, women's rights, and LGBTQIA+ rights; changes in patterns of daily living; and the burgeoning role of science and technological change in transmitting culture and affecting daily life.

The course learning goals, which align with the honors college program learning outcomes and university mission, emphasize oral communication, written communication, and information literacy. The course is structured to emphasize visual and other learning modalities. In this course, students are expected to

1. demonstrate an ability to give persuasive, timed oral presentations;
2. demonstrate an ability to work collaboratively with other students;
3. demonstrate an ability to write effectively in essay format;
4. demonstrate an ability to analyze critically a variety of information from various sources relating to historical figures, events, and trends; and
5. demonstrate an ability to evaluate and interpret complex information, identify patterns and trends, solve problems, and understand interrelationships at the national and global levels.

Teachers use rubrics to assess and evaluate the degree of student mastery of the learning goals associated with each assignment. (See Appendix 1.)

With an enrollment capped at twenty to insure a high degree of collaborative learning, the course is pedagogically innovative by

incorporating five unique, interactive assignments that are outlined below and then discussed in detail:

- Photos of Change over Time
- Ten Perspectives of Twentieth-Century American Identity through Twenty Years
- Redirecting the Fire: An Analysis of Billy Joel's Lyrics
- What's Really Important: An Oral Interview with an Octogenarian
- Pictionary Test Review

ASSIGNMENT 1:
PHOTOS OF CHANGE OVER TIME

This assignment is given on or near the first day of class. HON 315 students divide themselves into groups of three students each. The instructor makes note of who is in each group and assigns them a number. Each group must have at least one mobile phone that can take photos and send them by email. The communication must be by email and not MMS text. Students break into their groups and take twenty minutes to walk around campus, using their mobile phones to take photos of "Change over Time" in whatever way the students want to define the phrase. If the students request examples, the instructor is prepared to provide two or three examples. Each group is required to send the instructor two "change over time" photos. Any photos received after the first two from each group will be ignored by the instructor. In the subject line of the email to the instructor, students write (Group) 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, and such. The number represents the group number, "A" is the group's first photo submission, and "B" is the group's second photo submission.

Students return to class within twenty-five minutes. As student groups send their photos, the instructor compiles the photos into a folder on the computer under their titles (for example, 1A, 2B). Once all the groups have submitted both their group photos, a group member uses the class LCD projector to show the entire class

each photo in sequence. The instructor asks each group to explain its photos and why they exemplify “change over time.” There can be one presenter for the group or one presenter for each photo but not a free-for-all cacophony of all group members at once.

The purpose of the presentations is to persuade the class that one or both photos are excellent examples of “change over time.” They should explain how, why, and in what way(s) the photo(s) exemplify “change over time.” On small pieces of paper, each student writes his or her name and group number and then votes for one photo (outside of his/her own group) that best exemplifies this assignment. Students cannot vote for their own group. The instructor tallies the votes on the board, and the students from the group with the most votes each earn five extra credit points.

ASSIGNMENT 2:
TEN PERSPECTIVES ON TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN IDENTITY THROUGH TWENTY YEARS

In a spreadsheet, the instructor assigns all students one category for each class period that corresponds to a particular year within the course’s twenty-year time frame. Events, individuals, patterns, and trends are examined through these ten categories:

- Business and Economy
- Health and Medicine
- International
- Literature, Art, and Music
- Politics and Law
- Science and Technology
- Society and Culture
- Sports and Recreation
- Theater, Film, and Television
- Other

Each student presents orally in each category twice, but in different years. For example, "Student 1" presents in the category of "Science and Technology" for the year 1904 and again for 1968. Based on the spreadsheet of years and categories, each student knows in advance what he or she is responsible for presenting in class and the year to be covered for each class period. Table 1 comprises an example of the shared table from which the students organize their oral presentations.

The assignment is to pick only one image to represent the assigned category in the assigned year. The image can be a photograph, painting, drawing, poster, advertisement, or cartoon. For example, if the class is discussing the year 1919, a student assigned to address the "International" category might choose an image from the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and discuss its importance and ramifications for the United States and Europe. If the class covers the year 1960, a student responsible for the "Theater, Film, and Television" category might choose an image of the first U.S. televised presidential debate between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon and discuss its importance to U.S. politics and popular culture. A student assigned with the "Literature, Art, and Music" category for 1964 might decide to show a picture of the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan Show, which ushered in the British Invasion. Students begin to see that life does not lend itself succinctly into categories because they overlap in profound ways. They also learn the multiple perspectives or narratives related to any particular event.

All students must provide the citation (usually a URL) where they obtained the photograph, painting, drawing, poster, advertisement, or cartoon image. Students are required to enter into a shared Google Sheet the image URL and a brief description of the intended topic no later than the Sunday night before that week's in-class presentations. Students must work only one week ahead of the presentations in the hope that their critical thinking and analytical skills will develop as the course evolves, particularly in terms of the criteria for choosing what is important. A sample of the shared Google Sheet, illustrating just two students in two different years, is provided in Figure 1.

When students arrive at class, the instructor has a PowerPoint presentation with all of the submitted images for that year ready to project. Every student presents orally in each class period. Each student speaks for up to four minutes (timed) about why she or he chose that particular image for the assigned category and why it is important for members of the class to know about it. Reciting a *Wikipedia* entry is, of course, insufficient. The brief four-minute

Table 1. Example of Shared Table Used to Organize Oral Presentations

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9
	1904	1910	1919	1926	1933	1942	1949	1953	1960
Student 1	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R
Student 2	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R
Student 3	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M
Student 4	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M
Student 5	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E
Student 6	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E
Student 7	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L
Student 8	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L
Student 9	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C
Student 10	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C
Student 11	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I
Student 12	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I
Student 13	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O
Student 14	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O
Student 15	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T
Student 16	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T
Student 17	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T
Student 18	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T
Student 19	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M
Student 20	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M

Key: Business and Economy = B&E; Health and Medicine = H&M; International = I; Literature, Art, and Music = LA&M; Politics and Law = P&L; Science and Technology = S&T; Society and Culture = S&C; Sports and Recreation = S&R; Theater, Film, and Television = TF&T; Other = O

explanation forces students to concentrate on articulating the salient information succinctly, and questions from the instructor prompt students to evaluate their sources.

As an example, Figure 2 presents two slides discussed for the year 1920. The slide on the left is in the category "Politics and Law," and it illustrates the absence of United States participation in the League of Nations. The slide on the right illustrates the "Science

Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20
1964	1968	1974	1974	1980	1989	1991	1996	2001	2008	2016
H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M
H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M
S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R
S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R
LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M
LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M
B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E
B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E
P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L
P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L
S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C
S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C
I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I
I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O	I
O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O
O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T	O
TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T
TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T	TF&T
S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T
S&T	TF&T	O	I	S&C	P&L	B&E	LA&M	S&R	H&M	S&T

and Technology" category, and it features the introduction of Band-Aid bandages to American consumers.

By having two students present in the same category for each year, patterns and trends can be identified more clearly by the students. The instructor occasionally adds comments about the

Figure 1. Sample of Shared Google Sheet

	1910	1919
Jones	**Sports and Recreation:** Glacier National Park was established in Montana. <https://www.nps.gov/common/uploads/grid_builder/imr/crop16_9/DA3C1F02-1DD8-B71B-0BEA9E07D90D38B8.jpg?width=950&quality=90&mode=crop>	**International:** The International Labor Organization was founded on April 11, 1919. <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/media/images/web/e9844.jpg>
Smith	**Theater, Film, and Television:** Alice in Wonderland premiered. <http://application.denofgeek.com/pics/film/list/alice1910.jpg>	**Other:** The first official issue of the *Ashland Daily Tidings* newspaper was published. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn96088003/1919-09-02/ed-1/seq-1.pdf>

Figure 2. Example of PowerPoint Slides

images, events, or people based on his or her knowledge of the subject. Sometimes the instructor asks questions to see how much the students researched the topic represented by the image. If the student is confused or off base, the instructor gently encourages the student to research further. Questions and comments are considered when building the time structure of each class, which is based on 110-minute class periods.

As the course progresses, the students start to discuss the criteria by which importance, effect, or impact can be measured or quantified. Why do some people, places, and events pop up on "Events of the Twentieth Century" lists and others do not? Why do Americans exclude other images and stories that are arguably equally important?

ASSIGNMENT 3: REDIRECTING THE FIRE: AN ANALYSIS OF BILLY JOEL'S LYRICS

Students in this course are asked to analyze iconic artistic works in American popular culture that relate to United States history, such as Norman Rockwell's *Four Freedoms*, the Vietnam War Memorial, or the lyrics from Billy Joel's song "We Didn't Start the Fire." They are asked to explain these works in light of how Americans perceive themselves collectively and in terms of the image they want to promote to themselves, future generations, and the world. For example, students are asked to watch/listen to the Billy Joel song "We Didn't Start the Fire" on <http://www.Youtube.com>. The lyrics are provided in the syllabus. Students are asked to pick any five years in Joel's song. It doesn't matter which five years, and the choices do not need to be in a consecutive five-year sequence. Students then review carefully the historical figures and events Joel has chosen for those five years, familiarizing themselves with each event or historical figure mentioned in the song.

Students analyze patterns in the song and what Joel has omitted. For example, why does the songwriter focus on boxing and baseball but not football, basketball, or hockey? Students note how many

historical references Joel makes in each of the course's ten categories, excluding the "other" category. They observe which categories he focuses on least. Students quantify their answers, and they are urged to consider questions such as the following: "Other than lyrical rhyming, why does Joel choose the events and historical figures he includes in the song?" "In what ways might Joel's background and education influence what topics he chooses?"

As a part of this assignment, students are asked to count how many events or historical figures Joel includes in the five years they select. For example, if one were to choose 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961, Joel's song mentions thirty-two events or historical figures. Students are then required to re-write Joel's lyrics by replacing at least one half of the events or historical figures for the five years they chose.

In the above example (1957–1961), a student would need to replace at least sixteen historical figures or events. Students are told that they need not try to choose replacement historical figures or events that rhyme with the other lyrics in the song. For each replacement, students explain why their replacement historical figure or event, when compared to what Joel includes originally in his song, is more important or equally important to the year in question. For example, in 1961 OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) officially formed. This group would strongly influence, if not determine, worldwide oil production rates and consequently gasoline prices for decades to follow. This is arguably much more important in 1961 than the publication of Robert Heinlein's science-fiction novel *Stranger in a Strange Land*. The criteria for this replacement could include the quantifiable impact on worldwide transportation costs and economic development. Students write and submit an eight-to-ten-page double-spaced typed reflection justifying their changes to Joel's song, and the assignment's evaluation is based on a corresponding rubric.

ASSIGNMENT 4:
WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT:
AN ORAL INTERVIEW WITH AN OCTOGENARIAN

HON 315 requires each student to conduct an oral interview with a person who is at least eighty years old, or older, to compare and contrast the significant events of personal histories with those typically identified as "significant events of the twentieth century." If interviewees discuss the highlights of their lives in terms of milestones (marriage, birth of a child, relocation, military service, death of a loved one, or a particular job), students should listen to them as they explore those topics. Then, in the student's reflection, he or she should contrast "personal events" and "public events." People naturally discuss more personal turning points in their lives, which should prompt students to go beyond the personal and reflect on why shared national or international events are relevant in collective identity or what role they play in forming such identity. If a student's interviewee does not mention shared public events, the student should gently prompt the interviewee with a few examples, such as JFK's assassination, the Vietnam War, invention of the Internet or cell phones, 9/11, or Barak Obama's election. Then, in the student's reflection, he or she should describe and assess if what was identified as important in class mirrors or contradicts what the interviewee identified as important in his or her memory. Students must cite who they interviewed, where the interview took place, and when the interview took place. Although students are not issued a list of questions to ask, they are instructed to start the interview with a general request such as the following: "Please tell me about your life, major historical events you have experienced, and what has most impacted you." Students will record what the interviewee has to say, writing down any additional questions asked and the responses. Students write and submit a five-to-six-page double-spaced typed reflection on the interview, and its evaluation is based on a corresponding rubric.

ASSIGNMENT 5:
PICTIONARY TEST REVIEW

By the end of the course, students will have collectively reviewed 400 images and listened to as many corresponding explanations of significance. An effective way to refresh the students' memory of course content is by organizing a *Pictionary Test Review* as an in-class activity. The following description of the assignment assumes a class roster of twenty students and offers guidelines for the activity.

The first step in a *Pictionary Test Review* is when two "student assistants" volunteer or are chosen by the instructor. One keeps score and one keeps time. The class is divided into three teams, with six students on each team. Each team chooses a name. The team names are written on the board by the student assistant keeping score. Each team selects a spokesperson to answer for the team. Only that person can officially speak for that team.

The instructor proceeds by asking questions regarding selected content material presented in the course. The number of questions in a session typically ranges from twenty-five to fifty. For example, "What two Russian terms were initiatives of Mikhail Gorbachev, which were discussed in relation to the collapse of the Soviet Union when we covered the year 1991?" Teams must wait until each question is completely read before raising their hands. The first team to raise a hand and answer correctly gets to draw on the board. The spokesperson who answers correctly does not necessarily need to be the one who draws. Team members can take turns drawing.

At the instructor's discretion, students can use their notes or mobile devices to locate answers. There is a five-second maximum between the time students are called upon and when the correct answer must be provided by the spokesperson. If "Team One" correctly identifies *glasnost* and *perestroika* as the two terms that were initiatives of Mikhail Gorbachev and discussed in relation to the collapse of the Soviet Union when the class covered the year 1991, then a member of that team would have the chance to draw a term provided by the instructor from a predetermined list. The term being drawn does not necessarily connect to the original question

asked. In this case, the correct answers would be *glasnost* and *perestroika*, but the term to be drawn might be *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education*. This approach solidifies significant terms from the course content material for the students, and the intensity of their active participation solidifies the concept in the students' minds.

After each drawing, the students erase the board, and the instructor briefly reiterates the historical importance of the term that was drawn. If a student does not know the term, the instructor can explain it privately, and if the student still does not understand or remember, then that student can sit out and not participate in that round, allowing another member of his or her team to draw. Students have one minute to draw. Time starts when the student starts drawing. One of the student assistants keeps track of the time during each round. When a team correctly answers a question via the team spokesperson, only that team draws. During the minute that the student is drawing the term, all members of his or her team can answer, but only members of his or her team. There is no penalty for guessing multiple times or for guessing incorrectly.

The instructor and the student assistants serve as the judges, and they must hear the answers so students are encouraged to be assertive in their answers. At the instructor's discretion, every third play can be an "All Play" in which all teams draw simultaneously. Points are earned on all plays both by answering the question correctly and by correctly guessing the term being drawn. All play rounds allow all teams to compete on a relatively equal basis. On "All Plays," all drawers must start drawing at the same time, and they draw the same term. They may not speak, use numbers or letters, or act while drawing. Teams engaging in these activities are disqualified for that round.

Teams earn points in two ways: by correctly answering an all-play question or by correctly guessing the drawing. Teams have a chance to steal if the drawing team does not correctly guess the term in one minute. As soon as the judge announces, "Time is up," other teams may raise their hands with the answer. Only the team spokesperson can respond at this time. If teams repeatedly complain, the instructor, who is the ultimate judge, can deduct points.

The team with the most points at the end of the questions wins. At the instructor's discretion, the winning team earns extra-credit points for the course.

Throughout the semester, the instructor urges the students to look for recurring themes, patterns, and trends, asking the students to think critically about the following:

- What lasting changes are there over time?
- What do we share with Americans who lived 100 years ago?
- What do we value consistently as a nation?
- What constitutes being an American?
- What binds Americans together as a nation?
- In what ways, if any, are Americans unique from the rest of the global community?
- What are the commonalities Americans share with other members of the global community?

Essay test questions at the end of the term require students to reflect on these and similar questions about American identity and change over time.

CONCLUSION

HON 315: Perspectives on Twentieth-Century American Identity has been developed and offered at Southern Oregon University with a high degree of success for several terms. It aligns course learning outcomes with program learning outcomes, which in turn align with university learning outcomes and mission. It is structured with enough flexibility to allow for instructor preferences. The course requires a high degree of active student participation, creativity, and innovation, promoting multi-disciplinary analysis and critical-thinking skills. Each time it is taught, this course is different because of the variety of choices students make in their learning trajectory. It illustrates clearly the similarities people share, regardless of when they lived or where they were born, and it

illustrates simultaneously the diversity of human perspectives and experiences. For these reasons, it could serve as a possible model for other institutions wanting to develop lower-level, interactive honors courses.

APPENDIX 1

Rubrics

SOU Honors College HON 315 Rubric for Oral Communication

Factor	Expectation		Yes	No
Suitability	The presentation is appropriate and well adapted to the specific audience.			
Duration	The presenter(s) met the time limit.			
Attire	The presenter's attire is professional and appropriate.			
Format	__ Project __ Research __ Performance __ Recorded __ Live			
Oral Communication	Beginning (0–24 Points)	Developing (25–49 Points)	Accomplished (50–74 Points)	Exemplary (75–100 Points)
Sustained Central Focus	Does not communicate a clear central focus.	Establishes a central focus but does not sustain it.	Develops and sustains a central focus.	Reflects strong sense of purpose in establishing and sustaining a central focus.
Subject Knowledge Influences are documented.	Support is lacking or not effective in terms of timeliness, relevance, or authority.	Content is relevant, but support is uneven in terms of timeliness, relevance, or authority.	Support is effective in terms of timeliness, relevance, or authority; sources are referenced.	Relationships between assertions and evidence are consistently clear and of high quality; sources are cited.
Organizing Principles Presentation is logically sequenced and organized.	Information is not logically sequenced; presentation lacks coherence.	Information is structured but unevenly organized.	Information is well-structured and logically sequenced.	Information is presented in logical, interesting sequence; points are presented with parallel language.

Language Usage Language is inclusive and appropriate to the topic, audience, and occasion.	Language is not clear or vivid; words are ungrammatical, inappropriate, or not well adapted to audience.	Language is not always grammatical although most words are suitably formal.	Language is grammatically correct and suitably formal, clear, and vivid.	Language is tailored to the topic, audience, and occasion; language is elegant and persuasive.
Elocution Pitch, volume, and cadence are effective; delivery is fluent.	Voice too quiet or loud, not well paced; words mispronounced or poorly articulated; many hesitations or fillers.	Volume adequate; pitch varied; few mispronunciations; pacing somewhat inappropriate; some hesitations or fillers.	Voice appropriately pitched; good volume; delivery well-paced; no mispronunciations; few hesitations or fillers.	Voice used effectively; pace, pitch, and intensity varied; correct pronunciation used; pauses used for effect.
Nonverbal Communication Body language projects confidence and credibility.	Limited eye contact with audience; body language is ineffective or distracting; nervousness is obvious.	Eye contact occasionally made; body language and facial expressions are mostly relaxed; some nervousness is displayed.	Eye contact is generally sustained; body language is relaxed and confident; gestures are effective.	Eye contact is sustained; body language is confident and expressive; movements are fluid.
Visual Aids (Score only if visual aids are incorporated in presentation)	Visual aids detract from the presentation; text or images are flawed or irrelevant.	Visual aids do not detract from the presentation or do not add value; text or images have some errors.	Visual aids enhance the presentation; text or images have few errors.	Visual aids are essential to the presentation; text or images contain no errors.
Follow-Up (If Q&A is incorporated in presentation)	Answers are incomplete or misdirected; little or no effort is made to check understanding.	Quality of answers is varied; some effort is made to check understanding.	Answers are complete and on point; care is taken to check understanding.	Answers are well-structured and comprehensive; gaps in knowledge are openly admitted.

SOU Honors College HON 315 Rubric for Written Communication

Written Communication	Beginning (0–24 Points)	Developing (25–49 points)	Accomplished (50–74 points)	Exemplary (75–100 points)
Content Development and Organization of Ideas	Content demonstrates consideration of simple ideas that are evident in some elements of work. The presentation of ideas is mostly random. The writing is difficult to follow, and there is little to no organizational structure.	Content demonstrates attention to simple ideas that are evident in the work. Organizational structure is inconsistent. Transitions between supportive ideas and concepts are often rough.	Content demonstrates consideration of new ideas that are used to shape solid work. The paper is well organized and easy to follow. There is good flow, and there are transitions across supportive ideas and concepts.	Content explores complex ideas that are used to shape compelling work. The paper demonstrates strong and purposeful organization with meaningful, fluid transitions that enhance flow and impact.
Effectiveness of Expression (Fluency, Word Choice, Voice, Sentence Structure)	Fails to convey idea and lacks clarity of thought. Writing is readable but lacks fluency.	Conveys idea to readers with limited clarity. Writing lacks fluency.	Conveys idea to readers with general clarity and fluency, but there are some areas where clarity and/or fluency could be improved.	Conveys idea to readers with clarity and fluency consistently throughout the document.
Standard Conventions of Grammar, Punctuation, Mechanics, and Spelling	Writer shows persistent errors in using standard conventions. Errors seriously impede reading comprehension.	Writer uses standard conventions inconsistently. Many errors inhibit comprehension.	Writer uses most standard conventions effectively. A few consistent errors.	Writer uses standard conventions (grammar, punctuation, mechanics, spelling) effectively. Nearly error free.

SOU Honors College HON 315 Rubric for Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking	Beginning (0–24 Points)	Developing (25–49 points)	Accomplished (50–74 points)	Exemplary (75–100 points)
Sustained Central Focus	Writer does not communicate a clear central focus.	Writer somewhat develops and sustains clear focus.	Writer mostly develops and sustains a central focus.	Writer thoroughly develops and sustains clear central focus.
Evidence	Writer provides little or no evidence to support paper's central focus.	Writer provides uneven or insufficient evidence; evidence may be disconnected from central focus or subjective and undocumented.	Writer provides evidence to support the central focus; evidence is objective/external with little subjective opinion and includes citations and documentation.	Writer provides strong evidence; consistently utilizes and documents meaningful, objective, external evidence to support ideas and concepts.
Valid Inferences and Clear Conclusion	Writer does not attempt to draw inferences or use logical thought; restating a central focus is not reasoning. No conclusion drawn.	Writer attempts to apply logical thought to produce arguments, but inferences may be inaccurate or fallacious. Conclusion drawn, but not supported.	Writer applies logical thought to produce arguments, but some inferences may be invalid; reasoning may not always be easy to follow. Conclusion weakly supported.	Writer applies logical thought to produce arguments with valid inferences, organized reasoning, and clear conclusion. Writer accurately explains where the evidence does and does not support the central focus.

SOU Honors College HON 315 Rubric for Information Literacy

Information Literacy	Beginning (0–24 Points)	Developing (25–49 points)	Accomplished (50–74 points)	Exemplary (75–100 points)
Recognizes the Necessity to Cite Appropriate Sources	Cites very few or no discipline-appropriate sources.	Cites a few discipline-appropriate sources.	Cites several discipline-appropriate sources.	Cites many discipline-appropriate sources.
Cites Sources in a Complete and Consistent Format	References are incomplete and inconsistent. Not enough information is provided to locate sources.	References are somewhat complete and consistent. Some information is provided to locate sources.	References are mostly complete and consistent. Enough information is provided to locate most sources.	References are complete and consistent. Enough information is provided to locate all sources.
Distinguishes Timeliness of Sources—Current Unless of Historical Significance	Few or no sources published within an appropriate timeframe relevant to the subject matter.	Some sources published within an appropriate timeframe relevant to the subject matter.	Majority of sources published within an appropriate timeframe relevant to the subject matter.	All sources published within an appropriate timeframe relevant to the subject matter.
Chooses Sources Relevant to Subject Matter	Sources unrelated to research topic.	Sources somewhat related to research topic.	Sources mostly related to research topic.	Sources directly related to research topic.
Incorporates High-Quality, Discipline-Appropriate or Peer-Reviewed Sources	Little or no information from discipline appropriate or peer-reviewed sources. Sources are superficial or weak.	Some discipline appropriate or peer-reviewed sources somewhat aligned to research topic.	Many discipline appropriate or peer-reviewed sources generally aligned to research topic.	Most or all discipline appropriate or peer-reviewed sources closely aligned to research topic.

Integrates a Range of Sources—Books, Articles, Government Documents, Websites—Appropriate for Subject Matter	Unbalanced sources relying primarily on a single work or author.	Somewhat balanced and varied sources relying on a few different works and authors.	Mostly balanced and varied sources relying on several different works and authors.	Well-balanced and varied sources relying on multiple different works and authors.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Bending Time and Space: Three Approaches for Breaking Barriers in the Honors Classroom

James Ford
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Varying the typical format of the honors classroom is a great way to encourage creative thinking. When students become accustomed to what to expect from a class, they are often able to fulfill requirements with minimal effort. An unusual and challenging course experience requires students to focus, to think in new ways about their learning. This is part of why courses abroad are often so transformational: students constantly have to adjust to their new environment. The challenge for teachers like me who love leading courses abroad is how to create similarly engaging experiences at home. Using unusual course structures, meeting locations, and even changing the student population throughout the semester are all ways to keep students focused and prevent what Devon L.

Graham calls the "glassed-over look" (82). Here are three honors courses that use these approaches to engage students in novel ways.

THE INTERSESSION COURSE: THE NATURE OF TIME

Many institutions feature an interim session, a short-term course that falls between regular semesters. At my own school such courses have largely disappeared, particularly in the winter intersession that falls between fall and spring. Student demand is low, faculty would prefer to have their break, and the challenges of compressing a full semester into two weeks that bookend Christmas and New Year's Day are daunting. While a few departments still offer intersession courses (not to be confused, as students and some faculty often do, with intercessions, attempts to intervene in life-threatening situations), they are usually under-enrolled and struggle to remain viable and avoid cancellation. Honors intersession courses are a striking exception: they have been over-enrolled with a waiting list several years running. For students balancing the competing demands of a major or majors, a minor or minors, and honors—not to mention employment, an internship, and numerous campus activities, a two-week period without other classes or responsibilities offers an ideal opportunity for taking another honors course. The four-hours-per-day, five-days-a-week format is unique to the intersession and offers the perfect opportunity to test new assignments, subjects, and techniques. The format itself feels experimental since most students are accustomed to courses that meet for much smaller durations, usually fifty, seventy-five, or ninety minutes, once or twice a week. The experience is challenging for faculty as well because they must carefully plan a variety of activities to prevent each daily session from feeling like it is four hours long. Of all the intersession honors courses at Rogers State University, the most notable and effective is a course called "The Nature of Time."

This interdisciplinary honors seminar studies the problem of time from as many perspectives as possible. It includes philosophical

reflections on time; psychological accounts of the nature of memory; and time-travel literature and films, with mind-bending classics such as Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* and Alan Lightman's *Einstein's Dreams*. It is a great course, a joy to teach. The subject is conducive to a number of powerful assignments that focus on each student's individual experience and conception of time. Early in the course, the first of these assignments is keeping a personal Time Log of every activity.

The students track and record both what they do and the duration of these activities. I remember completing a similar log when I was a first-year student in college many years ago. Back then it was basically just an account of major activities designed to highlight how much time I should spend studying: if Monday has four hours of work, five hours of class, an hour of meals, and eight hours of sleep, then I am spending six hours on my own that I should be studying. Modern technology has transformed people's lives, complicating and making this task a very different proposition, in that an accurate Time Log will typically be two minutes of doing this, one minute of checking social media while also watching YouTube in the background, and then three minutes of more multitasking. Listing out exactly how the student is spending every minute of a single day highlights how much of modern time is wasted—whether the ideal is productivity, personal desire, or something more meaningful like an ethical or purposeful goal. Seeing on paper how they are spending their time leads most students to reflect seriously on their choices.

The next major assignment builds on this Time Log. Students choose one activity that they wished they had spent more time doing in a particular day and one activity that they would have wanted to do less. At this stage no standard is given for how to make the decision. Once students have briefly written about their two choices, the assignment for the next day is to do exactly that: to spend significantly more time on the first activity and significantly less time on the second. Afterwards, they reflect on paper about the results and about how their decisions changed their day. At this point I prompt students to make explicit the kind of standard they

used to evaluate the activities in their Time Log and to examine the advantages and disadvantages of different kinds of standards. A number of students have anecdotally cited this assignment as one that genuinely changed their lives, transforming who they are—just the kind of transformational learning that is at the heart of great teaching and learning.

Another assignment that was particularly significant for students was the day without screens. The day without screens is exactly what it sounds like: each student is required, as homework, to go twenty-four hours without using technology that involves a screen. No cell phones, no computers, no televisions, and no movie theatres. The assignment developed because so many students (roughly 90% of the class) cited some form of screen use as the activity they wished they did less. After much discussion, the class agreed that answering or placing a call on a cell phone was acceptable, but texting obviously was not. Even checking to see who was calling before answering was ruled out. The whole endeavor was voluntary, and it was up to the individual student to monitor his or her own personal use although several reported seeing and confronting classmates whom they observed using screens. A few students shared afterwards that they simply could not make it through the twenty-four hour period, and many others reported how challenging the activity was. This assignment highlighted for everyone how central such screens are to modern life and how much these screens occupy our time.

Another assignment from the Time course requires personal reflections on memories. Students must write about a memory of a time that they would love to experience again and again and of another time that they would give anything not to experience again. They then present either one to the class. These presentations are often emotional because a fair number describe times with loved ones who have died. Students often discuss their negative experiences with illness and injury as well as other painful moments. As difficult as these can be, the memories help students focus on the course's central questions: what is time and how do I want to spend the time that I have? For students spending four

hours per day in a classroom instead of on Christmas vacation, the questions can be particularly poignant. That the students happily do so is a sign of how successful these courses have been. In fact, several students have taken an honors intersession course in each of their four undergraduate years. Intersession courses, in general, and "The Nature of Time," in particular, are a great opportunity to engage students in new ways.

THE TRUE HYBRID:
HONORS CINEMA

I am often disappointed with online education, and I am resistant to offering honors courses online. Given the choice, I always prefer an in-person course to an online one, but sometimes no option is available. I have taught more than twenty-five online courses over the years and served as a peer reviewer for several others. Despite the logistical advantages of the format, the experience, in my view, is almost never as compelling or engaging as a good traditional class. Even hybrid courses, which promise to combine the best of in-person education with the convenience of online classes, rarely match the billing. Some subjects, however, are perfectly tailored to the hybrid format. "Honors Cinema," for example, is a course that presents intriguing possibilities. Carefully planned, it features the best of both formats.

The basic idea of the "Honors Cinema" hybrid is for faculty and students to watch and discuss films together in person while completing all the written work online: short responses, essays, and exams. One way to accomplish this is by scheduling the course as a true hybrid, which at my institution means meeting at a designated time each week for half the number of normal class meetings for a fully face-to-face course. In other words, a three-hour class would meet once a week for seventy-five minutes instead of the usual two times a week. The idea is that online work replaces the other class meeting each week. The advantage of this arrangement is that all students know the scheduled meeting time each week and include it in their plans; the disadvantage is that seventy-five

minutes are insufficient for most major films, and so a film is divided across multiple meetings. That dilemma is not unusual for a cinema course, but it is also not ideal. Fitting a film and its discussion into a single longer meeting may be preferable to needing multiple class periods to complete the screening of a film. Another option is scheduling this course as an online course, with optional film viewing sessions. For a largely captive population such as honors students, this arrangement is usually a good option. In a recent semester I worked for eight weeks to schedule a viewing at a time convenient to as many students as possible. This process was a logistical nightmare because I had to poll the students about times and then schedule a meeting at short notice. For the second half of the semester, we identified Thursday evenings as the one time that worked for most people and just stuck with it for eight weeks. Unfortunately, that time slot left some students out in ways the variable meeting did not, but longer-term planning was much easier. With both approaches, the offer of extra credit was enough to get most of the students attending and participating. The addition of pizza, popcorn, or other snacks some weeks was another incentive to attend.

The hybrid course has several advantages over the traditional version. For one, I was able to screen many more films than usual. Rather than screening ten to twelve films in a traditional face-to-face course, we had sixteen different viewing sessions that featured a major film or multiple short films. I always struggle to narrow the list of films I want to show, and so including several more allowed me to construct a much more satisfying experience. Another advantage was that I was able to accommodate thirty-seven students in a course that is normally limited to twenty-five. Although that increase could severely harm the educational experience in other courses (and it certainly aggravated my grading workload), for Honors Cinema the strategy worked. The discussions were just as rich and engaging as in the traditional course. Given that the structural challenges at Rogers State University involve being able to offer enough honors courses and making the best use of the few sections available for faculty to teach in honors, the hybrid

approach was a real plus. A third advantage of the hybrid format was that it encouraged students who are less vocal or shy to participate through the various online forums and discussions. It also made it more natural for us to attend local screenings of both classic and new films several times during the semester because the class was already comfortable with meeting at strange times. Finally, the hybrid course provided a way for our honors program to test the waters of online education. While I still prefer the on-ground experience, the Hybrid Cinema course helps to make the case for when online honors education can work and when online is inappropriate.

THE TEMPORARY COMBINATION: JOINT HONORS SEMINARS

The third approach that the Rogers State University Honors Program has implemented to challenge the usual classroom experience is to combine different courses for brief periods throughout the semester. Every fall, three required Honors Seminars for different populations (first-year, sophomore, and junior) are scheduled at the same time. Twice a month, the three courses meet together in a Joint Seminar instead of meeting separately. Since each seminar typically has approximately twenty students, the Joint Seminar means close to sixty students will gather in a lounge space that seats twenty-five. The students must transition from a small, organized class where they know each other well and usually sit in the same seat every time to being part of a massive, seemingly chaotic mess where they will barely know a third of their classmates. The disruption is significant, but it has become a signature feature of the honors experience, and it provides distinctive opportunities for building teams, presentation skills, and relationships across classes.

The experience is exciting for everyone involved, and to keep it from falling apart requires careful faculty planning and organization. After a brief welcome at the first Joint Seminar, we quickly divide the large group of students into four-person teams. These teams involve at least one person from each class and a variety of

majors. We have tried various ways to divide the teams, from letting students select to having the combined faculty carefully sort the students. The best years have been when students form their own teams in response to some arbitrary ice-breaking challenge, such as forming the team whose members have the most distance between their hometowns, or having prizes for the team with the most letters in their last names and the team with the fewest. Having a brief competition like that leads to tremendous interaction right away and gives the students a chance to mingle and move around before settling down into the academic activities that follow.

While these Joint Seminars sometimes feature a brief reading assignment that is distributed in advance, most of the time they focus on the nature of honors education and the honors program itself. Reviewing the NCHC's "Basic Characteristics," its "Definition of Honors Education," or the learning outcomes of other honors programs are all great ways to push students to reflect on what their own program does well and what it might do better. I would not want the whole semester to focus on the nature of honors, but these intermittent joint sessions provide a logical venue for critical reflection on honors education.

These Joint Seminars are also an excellent space for team-building and developing relationships with students in different classes. These are teams, not just groups, and they are assigned definite tasks as homework. The teams meet outside of class several times per month, and they present their work late in the semester. The assignment varies—one year each team created a commercial for the honors program, while another year each team wrote and performed a skit that would be worthwhile for a first-year orientation program. What is most important is that students are engaged and excited to be working with students from other classes. A common complaint in honors is that upper-class students rarely know the younger students, and these Joint Seminars are a great way to combat that problem. We have tried longer periods of interaction, such as Joint Seminars that meet together a month straight or even all semester, but that is too much of a good thing. Once or twice a month for four months is enough to build strong teams and

complete meaningful tasks without undermining the home course or having these students tire of their teammates or the assignment.

The Intersession course, the Hybrid, and the Joint Seminar are three different ways of approaching the same issue: how to vary students' experiences so that they are constantly engaged and learning. Providing a variety of formats, combinations, and classrooms stretches the boundaries of honors education, but, admittedly, it is often more work for the faculty. Fortunately, faculty take on these extra tasks because of their commitment to honors students. This variety engages students in new ways, providing distinctive opportunities for transformational teaching and learning.

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Reading to Improve Teaching and Learning

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Scholarship on teaching and learning has exploded in volume and influence in recent decades, providing all of us who are dedicated to improving our roles as professors with a dizzying array of books and other resources. Faculty development as a specific area of study and professional growth and centers designed to promote and support better teaching (often called CETLs for Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning or CATLs for Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning) have multiplied on campuses around the globe.

The United States is home to a number of support networks, including POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education), NEFDC (New England Faculty Development Consortium), SRFIDC (Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium), and HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Faculty Development Network. These support networks have also proliferated worldwide. Country-specific organizations include groups such as SEDA (Staff and Educational Development Association, U.K.), HERDSA (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia), STLHE (Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Canada), JAED (Japan Association for Educational Development in Higher Education), and SFDN (Swiss Faculty Development Network). ICED (International Consortium for Educational Development) is one example of a fully international association that holds its biennial meetings in locations such as South Africa, Canada, Sweden, Thailand, Spain, Australia, United States, Germany, and Finland. Even specialized journals such as

The Journal of Faculty Development and the *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning* are now widely circulated as resources for faculty development and improvement of teaching and learning.

Many instructional and organizational initiatives have also produced new approaches and rekindled traditional strategies for better teaching and deeper learning. Collaborative learning, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, team-based learning, integrative learning, team teaching, flipped classrooms, interdisciplinary courses and programs, professional and student learning portfolios, outcomes-based curricula, reflective practice, active-learning pedagogies, scholarship of teaching and learning, evidence-based practice, neuroscience and learning, online education, differentiated educational programs, developmental education, learning styles or preferences, learning mindsets, resilience, the first-year experience, high-impact practices, service learning, backward design—all of these (the list goes on and on) have become ubiquitous mantras in higher education. Such movements have sparked much attention to the art and craft of teaching and the complexities involved in inspiring the kind of meaningful, transformative, and lasting learning that we prize in honors and in all our academic and experiential programs designed for promoting excellence in our students' learning. All of these strategies and ideals undergird the ideas and practical suggestions found in this volume.

But where do we begin to study the myriad resources available on teaching and learning? In this volume, each of the chapters contains useful references that provide a starting point for further reading on a variety of topics. The wealth of information available in print and online journals and in websites is enormous, and I trust that today's professors are skilled enough to search for them in standing libraries and in the rapidly changing landscape of the Internet. In my long tenure in honors education, however, I am regularly and pleasantly surprised by how hungry new as well as seasoned honors faculty, administrators, and students are to learn more about the complexities of teaching and learning. At one conference after another, at one institute after another, in one NCHC listserv post after another, questions about recommended

resources abound. This hunger is a sign of the dynamic character of honors professionals and students who are dedicated to academic excellence.

In the following section, I offer a selected list of many books that readers may find helpful in discovering or revisiting ways to improve our work as instructors and scholars of teaching and learning. From the venerable lecture to the flipped classroom, from Socratic discussion to online threaded forums, from test design to electronic portfolios, the books I share represent some of the best thinking, research, and writing in our field. One of the lessons we may glean from inspecting such resources is how honors has long been at the forefront of many of the inspiring theories and best-practice applications found in decades of scholarship on teaching and learning. The essays in this volume are a glimpse into the creativity and vitality of our programs, faculty, and students. Honors has never been behind the curve.

Considering the exemplary pedagogies and examples shared by our present authors, I suppose that one of the challenges that lies ahead for honors and that we should embrace with urgency is how to reimagine and retool higher education so that all our students—honors or not—enjoy the benefits of the deep, transformative learning we value in honors. The time for breaking barriers in teaching and learning is now.

Happy reading!

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BARBARA J. MILLIS, now retired after a thirty-year career in faculty development, has co-authored or edited four books and published numerous teaching-related articles, including IDEA papers on metacognition and cooperative, deep, and active learning. She has offered workshops at professional conferences and for over 300 colleges and universities and has won both teaching and research awards. She currently serves as one of two Executive Editors of *College Teaching*.

KEN R. MULLIKEN earned his degrees in the University of Missouri system. For a decade he served as a professor of history and global studies and as Department Chair at the University of Saint Mary. Mulliken launched the Honors College at Southern Oregon University, working as its inaugural Executive Director. He serves currently as Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education at the University of Illinois-Springfield and as President of the Western Regional Honors Council.

DAHLIANI REYNOLDS is Assistant Professor of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition at Roger Williams University. She teaches first-year courses in the honors program as well as advanced courses in the Professional and Public Writing minor, and she serves on the Honors Advisory Council.

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ROB VAN DER VAART recently retired as the honors dean of Utrecht University and the dean of the University College Utrecht in The Netherlands. He was a program leader of a course on honors teaching.

TODD ZAKRAJSEK currently holds positions at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as Associate Professor in the College of Medicine and as Adjunct Associate Professor of Faculty Development in the College of Veterinary Medicine at North Carolina State University. Prior to his current positions, Zakrajsek founded centers for teaching and learning at Southern Oregon State University and Central Michigan University. He has published widely on the areas of faculty development and student learning.

JOHN ZUBIZARRETA is Professor of English, Director of Honors, and former Director of Faculty Development and Dean of Undergraduate Studies at Columbia College. He was the 2010 Carnegie Foundation/CASE U.S. Professor of the Year for Baccalaureate Colleges and the 1994 CASE Professor for South Carolina. He has led faculty development workshops, presented papers, and delivered keynote addresses worldwide on American and comparative literatures, teaching and learning, faculty and administrative evaluation, and honors education. Zubizarreta is a Past President of NCHC and SRHC; an NCHC Fellow; an NCHC-Recommended Program Reviewer; Co-Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee; and editorial reviewer for *Honors in Practice*, *Journal of Excellence in College Teaching*, and *College Teaching*.

ABOUT THE NCHC MONOGRAPH SERIES

The Publications Board of the National Collegiate Honors Council typically publishes two to three monographs a year. The subject matter and style range widely: from handbooks on nuts-and-bolts practices and discussions of honors pedagogy to anthologies on diverse topics addressing honors education and issues relevant to higher education.

The Publications Board encourages people with expertise interested in writing such a monograph to submit a prospectus. Prospective authors or editors of an anthology should submit a proposal discussing the purpose or scope of the manuscript; a prospectus that includes a chapter by chapter summary; a brief writing sample, preferably a draft of the introduction or an early chapter; and a *curriculum vitae*. All monograph proposals will be reviewed by the NCHC Publications Board.

Direct all proposals, manuscripts, and inquiries about submitting a proposal to the General Editor of the Monograph Series:

Dr. Jeffrey A. Portnoy
General Editor, Monograph Series
Honors College
Perimeter College
Georgia State University

jportnoy@gsu.edu

NCHC Monographs & Journals

Assessing and Evaluating Honors Programs and Honors Colleges: A Practical Handbook by Rosalie Otero and Robert Spurrier (2005, 98pp). This monograph includes an overview of assessment and evaluation practices and strategies. It explores the process for conducting self-studies and discusses the differences between using consultants and external reviewers. It provides a guide to conducting external reviews along with information about how to become an NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor. A dozen appendices provide examples of "best practices."

Beginning in Honors: A Handbook by Samuel Schuman (Fourth Edition, 2006, 80pp). Advice on starting a new honors program. Covers budgets, recruiting students and faculty, physical plant, administrative concerns, curriculum design, and descriptions of some model programs.

Breaking Barriers in Teaching and Learning edited by James Ford and John Zubizarreta (2018, 252pp). This volume—with wider application beyond honors classrooms and programs—offers various ideas, practical approaches, experiences, and adaptable models for breaking traditional barriers in teaching and learning. The contributions inspire us to retool the ways in which we teach and create curriculum and to rethink our assumptions about learning. Honors education centers on the power of excellence in teaching and learning. Breaking free of barriers allows us to use new skills, adjusted ways of thinking, and new freedoms to innovate as starting points for enhancing the learning of all students.

Fundrai$ing for Honor$: A Handbook by Larry R. Andrews (2009, 160pp). Offers information and advice on raising money for honors, beginning with easy first steps and progressing to more sophisticated and ambitious fundraising activities.

A Handbook for Honors Administrators by Ada Long (1995, 117pp). Everything an honors administrator needs to know, including a description of some models of honors administration.

A Handbook for Honors Programs at Two-Year Colleges by Theresa James (2006, 136pp). A useful handbook for two-year schools contemplating beginning or redesigning their honors program and for four-year schools doing likewise or wanting to increase awareness about two-year programs and articulation agreements. Contains extensive appendices about honors contracts and a comprehensive bibliography on honors education.

The Honors College Phenomenon edited by Peter C. Sederberg (2008, 172pp). This monograph examines the growth of honors colleges since 1990: historical and descriptive characterizations of the trend, alternative models that include determining whether becoming a college is appropriate, and stories of creation and recreation. Leaders whose institutions are contemplating or taking this step as well as those directing established colleges should find these essays valuable.

Honors Composition: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Practices by Annmarie Guzy (2003, 182pp). Parallel historical developments in honors and composition studies; contemporary honors writing projects ranging from admission essays to theses as reported by over 300 NCHC members.

Honors Programs at Smaller Colleges by Samuel Schuman (Third Edition, 2011, 80pp). Practical and comprehensive advice on creating and managing honors programs with particular emphasis on colleges with fewer than 4,000 students.

The Honors Thesis: A Handbook for Honors Directors, Deans, and Faculty Advisors by Mark Anderson, Karen Lyons, and Norman Weiner (2014, 176pp). To all those who design, administer, and implement an honors thesis program, this handbook offers a range of options, models, best practices, and philosophies that illustrate how to evaluate an honors thesis program, solve pressing problems, select effective requirements and procedures, or introduce a new honors thesis program.

Housing Honors edited by Linda Frost, Lisa W. Kay, and Rachael Poe (2015, 352pp). This collection of essays addresses the issues of where honors lives and how honors space influences educators and students. This volume includes the results of a survey of over 400 institutions; essays on the acquisition, construction, renovation, development, and even the loss of honors space; a forum offering a range of perspectives on residential space for honors students; and a section featuring student perspectives.

If Honors Students Were People: Holistic Honors Education by Samuel Schuman (2013, 256pp). What if honors students were people? What if they were not disembodied intellects but whole persons with physical bodies and questing spirits? Of course . . . they are. This monograph examines the spiritual yearnings of college students and the relationship between exercise and learning.

Inspiring Exemplary Teaching and Learning: Perspectives on Teaching Academically Talented College Students edited by Larry Clark and John Zubizarreta (2008, 216pp). This rich collection of essays offers valuable insights into innovative teaching and significant learning in the context of academically challenging classrooms and programs. The volume provides theoretical, descriptive, and practical resources, including models of effective instructional practices, examples of successful courses designed for enhanced learning, and a list of online links to teaching and learning centers and educational databases worldwide.

Occupy Honors Education edited by Lisa L. Coleman, Jonathan D. Kotinek, and Alan Y. Oda (2017, 394pp). This collection of essays issues a call to honors to make diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence its central mission and ongoing state of mind. Echoing the AAC&U declaration "without inclusion there is no true excellence," the authors discuss transformational diversity, why it is essential, and how to achieve it.

NCHC Monographs & Journals

The Other Culture: Science and Mathematics Education in Honors edited by Ellen B. Buckner and Keith Garbutt (2012, 296pp). A collection of essays about teaching science and math in an honors context: topics include science in society, strategies for science and non-science majors, the threat of pseudoscience, chemistry, interdisciplinary science, scientific literacy, philosophy of science, thesis development, calculus, and statistics.

Partners in the Parks: Field Guide to an Experiential Program in the National Parks by Joan Digby with reflective essays on theory and practice by student and faculty participants and National Park Service personnel (First Edition, 2010, 272pp). This monograph explores an experiential-learning program that fosters immersion in and stewardship of the national parks. The topics include program designs, group dynamics, philosophical and political issues, photography, wilderness exploration, and assessment.

Partners in the Parks: Field Guide to an Experiential Program in the National Parks edited by Heather Thiessen-Reily and Joan Digby (Second Edition, 2016, 268pp). This collection of recent photographs and essays by students, faculty, and National Park Service rangers reflects upon PITP experiential-learning projects in new NPS locations, offers significant refinements in programming and curriculum for revisited projects, and provides strategies and tools for assessing PITP adventures.

Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning edited by Bernice Braid and Ada Long (Second Edition, 2010, 128pp). Updated theory, information, and advice on experiential pedagogies developed within NCHC during the past 35 years, including Honors Semesters and City as Text™, along with suggested adaptations to multiple educational contexts.

Preparing Tomorrow's Global Leaders: Honors International Education edited by Mary Kay Mulvaney and Kim Klein (2013, 400pp). A valuable resource for initiating or expanding honors study abroad programs, these essays examine theoretical issues, curricular and faculty development, assessment, funding, and security. The monograph also provides models of successful programs that incorporate high-impact educational practices, including City as Text™ pedagogy, service learning, and undergraduate research.

Setting the Table for Diversity edited by Lisa L. Coleman and Jonathan D. Kotinek (2010, 288pp). This collection of essays provides definitions of diversity in honors, explores the challenges and opportunities diversity brings to honors education, and depicts the transformative nature of diversity when coupled with equity and inclusion. These essays discuss African American, Latina/o, international, and first-generation students as well as students with disabilities. Other issues include experiential and service learning, the politics of diversity, and the psychological resistance to it. Appendices relating to NCHC member institutions contain diversity statements and a structural diversity survey.

Shatter the Glassy Stare: Implementing Experiential Learning in Higher Education edited by Peter A. Machonis (2008, 160pp). A companion piece to *Place as Text*, focusing on recent, innovative applications of City as Text™ teaching strategies. Chapters on campus as text, local neighborhoods, study abroad, science courses, writing exercises, and philosophical considerations, with practical materials for instituting this pedagogy.

Teaching and Learning in Honors edited by Cheryl L. Fuiks and Larry Clark (2000, 128pp). Presents a variety of perspectives on teaching and learning useful to anyone developing new or renovating established honors curricula.

Writing on Your Feet: Reflective Practices in City as Text™ edited by Ada Long (2014, 160pp). A sequel to the NCHC monographs *Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning* and *Shatter the Glassy Stare: Implementing Experiential Learning in Higher Education*, this volume explores the role of reflective writing in the process of active learning while also paying homage to the City as Text™ approach to experiential education that has been pioneered by Bernice Braid and sponsored by NCHC during the past four decades.

***Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* (*JNCHC*)** is a semi-annual periodical featuring scholarly articles on honors education. Articles may include analyses of trends in teaching methodology, articles on interdisciplinary efforts, discussions of problems common to honors programs, items on the national higher education agenda, and presentations of emergent issues relevant to honors education.

***Honors in Practice* (*HIP*)** is an annual journal of applied research publishing articles about innovative honors practices and integrative, interdisciplinary, and pedagogical issues of interest to honors educators.

UReCA, *The NCHC Journal of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity*, is a web-based, peer-reviewed journal edited by honors students that fosters the exchange of intellectual and creative work among undergraduates, providing a platform where all students can engage with and contribute to the advancement of their individual fields. To learn more, visit <http://www.nchc-ureca.com>.

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from *Breaking Barriers in Teaching and Learning*—

"The Teaching and Learning Committee of [NCHC recognizes] that the fundamental mission of honors education centers on the power of excellence in teaching and learning . . . inside and outside the classroom. What we deem as vital dimensions of the honors enterprise—both philosophical and practical—should be the imperatives that drive all . . . teaching, all . . . courses and programs, all . . . learning experiences. . . . [T]he essays in this volume have wider application beyond the honors classroom or program, and we hope that readers—within and outside of honors—will adapt and use the various ideas, practical approaches, experiences, and models shared in the various chapters. . . .

All of the contributions . . . inspire us to retool the ways in which we teach and create curriculum and to rethink our assumptions about learning. Collectively, they challenge us to deconstruct perceptions that just because we teach, students learn; that our disciplinary training makes us automatically effective teachers; that rigor is a function of amount and difficulty of work rather than complexity and integration of work; and that students learn in uniform ways. Responding to the challenges presented directly or indirectly by the contents of our volume requires that we remain open to breaking barriers that prevent us from achieving the highest goals of honors education. Breaking free of barriers allows us . . . to innovate. . . ."

— John Zubizarreta and James Ford

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