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Information Literacy and Student Engagement: Cultivating Student Learning through Critical Pedagogy and Critical Reflection

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- Campuses in Illinois, Wisconsin, Florida, NLU Online Campus (Desire2Learn)
- Main population: working adults
    - accelerated classes and programs
- Teaching: F2F, online, credit courses
    - LIBR200: Digital Information Literacy
    - LIBR300: Library Research for the Social Sciences

Learning theories *inform* our teaching

Critical Pedagogy

- Education is for social change
- Resist power structures and oppression
  - make them visible
- Challenge assumptions & ideologies
  - Aim: develop critical consciousness
- Critical Information Literacy: examine the social construction of information; what is considered "legitimate knowledge"
  - Knowledge and information created and grounded in social & cultural contexts

Critical Reflection

- Examine assumptions, universal truths, & common sense wisdom (Brookfield)
- Dig deeper into knowledge construction
- Ask Why?
- Crucial for critical thinking
- Foster "critical learning" (St. Clair, 2004)
    - challenge common sense
    - engage students in developing critical perspectives

Where we started

Article Assignment

"Is the Internet helping to free people from oppressive governments or is it simply giving those authoritarian regimes another way to spy on dissidents?"

Citing

"Why should you avoid plagiarism?"

Do these questions encourage critical thinking?

Embedding critical questions

Frame lessons with guiding questions

Module / Topics	Guiding Questions
Evaluating Sources	What evaluation criteria are most important? How do you decide whether or not information is accurate?
APA Citation	What is the purpose of citing? What does academic integrity mean to you?

The importance of "WHY?"

Examine the meaning behind everyday activities

- "Why is it important to evaluate information?"

- "Why is it important to cite?"

WHY WE CITE

Why citing is beneficial and valued in Higher Education:

- Scholarship is built on learning from different works
- Citing helps communicate these works by linking directly to an author's exact words and/or ideas
- Helps you to write and think for yourself
- An act of honesty and academic integrity; considered ethical behavior

WHY WE CITE

- Give credit to the words and ideas that are not your own

- *Honor* others by citing their ideas and words

- Create a *path* to the works, ideas, and knowledge of others

- *Distinguish* your original thoughts and ideas from others

- Demonstrate that you are *building* on others works

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Is common knowledge:

- *a shared knowledge*
- *specific to individuals*
- *Specific to different cultures?*

Context: Authority, privilege, knowledge construction

"Why is the peer-review process highly regarded in higher education?"

"What is considered common knowledge?"

"Who can use Web 2.0 tools and who cannot?"

"What criteria do you **personally** consider most important when evaluating a source?"

Critical incident questionnaire (CIQ)

- At what moment in class did you feel most **engaged** with what was happening?

- At what moment in class were you most **distanced** from what was happening?

- What action that anyone (teacher or student) took did you find most **affirming or helpful?**

- What action that anyone took did you find most **puzzling or confusing?**

- What about the class **surprised you the most?** (This could be about your own reactions to what went on, something that someone did, or anything else that occurs).

Critical incident questionnaire (CIQ)

"I feel more engaged when we have discussions."
"I get more distracted after a discussion."

"When we have discussions I feel like no one in the class talks and it's really frustrating because it makes the class awkward and boring...I think the students in the class are just dumb."

"Discussions: The time when we got to discuss our opinions. It lets me know our teachers care about how we feel and what we think."

Reflection journals

"Common knowledge is general knowledge, public knowledge, knowledge that is available to anyone. For example, the number of bones in the leg could be considered common knowledge in an athletic training course. But if you are using that fact in an English paper, **you cannot assume your professor would have that knowledge, and you would need to cite it**."

"I find myself worrying about applying common knowledge too liberally. **I'm worried it may lead to leaving unintentional gaps of information by being vague or not properly referring to supporting facts**. Or even worse, being accused of plagiarizing. **I'm not sure if common knowledge is being encouraged or we are just being reminded of accepted use**."

Selected Resources & Readings

Brookfield, Stephen B. (2013) *Powerful techniques for teaching adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, Stephen B. (2012). *Teaching for critical thinking: Tools and techniques to help students question their assumptions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Freire, Paulo. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum International Publishing.

Giroux, Henry A. (1983). Theories of reproduction and resistance in the new sociology of education: A critical analysis. *Harvard Educational Review*, 55(5), 257-293.

Selected Resources & Readings

"Changing Lives, Changing the World: Information Literacy and Critical Pedagogy." online workshop. Library Juice Academy. http://libraryjuiceacademy.com/index.php.

Elmborg, James. (2006). Critical information literacy: Implications for instructional practice. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 32(2), 192-199.

Jacobs, Heidi L.M. (2008). Information praxis and reflective pedagogical praxis. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 34(3): 256-262.

Accardi, Maria T., Dabrinski, Emily, Kumbier, Alana. (2010). *Critical Library Instruction*. Duluth, MN: Library Juice Press.

St. Clair, Ralf. (2004). Teaching with the enemy: Critical Adult Education in the Academy. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education. 102: 35-43.

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Resources and slides available at **http://bit.ly/17HHmyV**