Terms of Engagement:
Understanding and Promoting Engagement in Today’s College Classroom

Workshop with Elizabeth F. Barkley on August 30, 2012

Participant Generated Knowledge Repository:
Solutions to Identified Problems

Group 1: What are ideas for getting students to make connections across curricular areas?
- Joint assessment of a project across 2 courses – present biology knowledge as project for speech class; applying your subject matter to other classes and/ or current events.
- Shared resources – unite one or more classes for a guest lecture, film, or experience.
- Assign a cross-interdisciplinary project – for example: geography and political science students create a political voting map of Wisconsin or the Chippewa Valley and explain patterns.

Group 2: What are ideas for getting students to disengage from social media in the Classroom?
- Create responsible roles during group work.
- Identify rules or expectations about social media usage.
- Get the students to come up with social media restrictions.
- Communicate to students that I (the instructor) spend time on class, so have empathy.
- Do hands-on activities that involve both hands.

Group 3: What are ideas to get students to participate/ engage in classroom lectures/ discussions?
- Use group work effectively.
- Use technology to engage students – i>Clickers.
- Implement the Rotational Socratic Method.

Group 4: What are ideas to get students to go beyond the minimum?
- Grade incentives or extra discussion sessions.
- Emphasize the value of the course.
- Connect course content to personal experiences and career goals.

Group 5: What are ideas for getting students to do their homework outside of class?
- Give out prompt questions that students must consider along with their assignment.
- Use D2L.
- Give a due date, check in with the students as they progress, and accept late work if necessary (only give partial credit).
- Make the assignment valuable to the students’ education.
Group 6: What are ideas for getting students to manage their time?
- Break down large assignments – chunk it.
- Provide a calendar giving clear due dates.
- Regularly scheduled quizzes.
- Get to know other classes in their semester.

Group 7: What are ideas to keep off-site students engaged?
- Get to know their names to better connect and build a relationship with them.
- If it is feasible, teach at their site a few times throughout the course.
- Use the Think-Pair-Share discussion technique.
- Rotate group responsibilities – recorder, reporter, experience, etc.
- Create a Facebook page for the class.
- Find examples that pertain to off-site students.

Group 8: What are ideas for getting students to take risks to collaborate publically?
- Implement the Think-Pair-Share technique.
- Work in groups and use small group discussions rotating individual responsibilities (reporter, recorder, experience, etc.).
- Develop a safe environment to create a learning community.

Group 9: What are ideas for getting students to be more self-reliant?
- Develop confidence to solve problems by – setting the context, create tasks at appropriate “challenge” level, and reward them for using resources outside of the classroom.
- Do not “spoon feed” them; set up conditions so they have to complete educational tasks.
- Do not allow “0’s” for grades; make them complete the exercises.
- Balance how much scaffolding you provide with the students’ educational independence.

Group 10: What are ideas for breaking the cycle of “grades are very important”?
- Bring in employers that do not specifically look for grades when hiring.
- Place an emphasis on learning for learning sake – transferability of what they have learned to other situations in their lives.

Group 11: What are ideas for getting students to see the relevance in course material?
- Connect it to their world of personal experience.
- Current examples from contemporary events.
- Ask students to generate their own examples in the class.
- Emphasize the relevance of the subject at the beginning of every class.
- Have students generate ideas by using current media.
- Implement puzzles, give them unusual information, and surprise them about the subject.