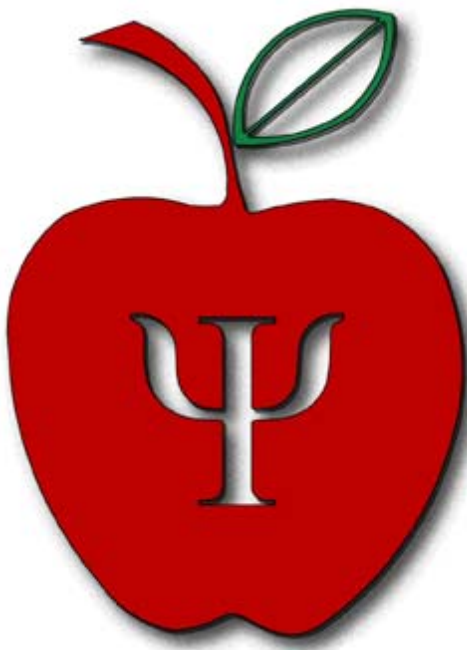


# Essays from E-xcellence in Teaching

## Volume VII

A collection of monthly essays originally published on the  
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*Edited by*

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# Introduction

**T**he Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP, Division 2 of the American Psychological Association) launched its Internet electronic discussion list, PsychTeacher™, in late 1998. In the spring of 2000, *E-xcellence in Teaching*, a monthly column devoted to the teaching of psychology, joined the list. The column features monthly essays devoted to teaching at the high school, community college, and university levels in general, and to the teaching of psychology in particular. The essays take the form of lessons learned, advice and hints on particular aspects of teaching, lore regarding teaching, book reviews, and reflections on our roles as teachers of psychology. In general, though, the primary focus of the column is to provide a forum for the discussion and promotion of effective teaching practices.

This compilation of essays forms Volume VII of *E-xcellence in Teaching*. The first volume, which appeared on STP's Web site in 2002, contains the first 20 *E-xcellence in Teaching* essays that were posted on the discussion list in 2000-2001; Volume II contains 13 essays from 2002; Volume III contains 12 essays posted in 2003; Volume IV contains 12 essays posted in 2004; Volume V contains 13 essays posted in 2005; and Volume VI contains 12 essays posted in 2006. The present volume of *E-xcellence in Teaching* is comprised of 12 essays that appeared on the discussion list in 2007.

We thank the authors of these essays for their valuable contributions to the column and to the literature on the teaching of psychology and the scholarship on teaching and learning. We are also grateful to the previous editors of *E-xcellence in Teaching*, Bryan Saville and Tracy Zinn, for ensuring a smooth transition of the column during the past year.

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## Strategies for Reaching Sexual Minority Students Inside and Outside the Classroom

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**E**ven on the most open campuses, sexual minority individuals [i.e., lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersexual (LGBTQQI) people] often feel excluded in the educational environment. Although there are certainly active attempts to marginalize these individuals, marginalization also occurs due to benign neglect resulting from "invisibility." As a result of this invisibility, active strategies can and should be used to incorporate LGBTQQI students into campus life inside and outside of the classroom. This chapter provides information about some basic strategies for faculty members to accomplish this objective.

Strategies that can be used inside the classroom fall into two broad categories: obvious and subtle. Obvious strategies are direct in nature and have little ambiguity or room for interpretation in the attempt to be inclusive. Subtle strategies, on the other hand, attain the goal of inclusiveness in less direct ways. Even though these two types of strategies overlap, we assign examples to one category or the other for the sake of simplicity.

### Obvious Strategies for Use Inside the Classroom

#### *Invite speakers to give relevant presentations*

One of the most obvious ways to reach LGBTQQI students, and all students for that matter, is through the use of invited speakers and presentations on related topics. Openly LGBTQQI professionals/psychologists in the community can be a valuable resource for courses. Many LGBTQQI community organizations have speakers' bureaus that are excited by invitations to address students. However, it is imperative that LGBTQQI-relevant coverage go beyond topics such as sexually transmitted diseases and hate crimes. Although these are extremely important issues for all people, focusing too much time on these negatives gives a skewed perception of LGBTQQI people and life. Some national organizations that may have local chapters or may be able to give you leads on speakers in your community include the Human Rights Campaign (<http://www.hrc.org/>); Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (<http://www.pflag.org/>); and the American Civil Liberties Union (<http://www.aclu.org/>).

#### *Assign articles for your students to read*

Although this strategy probably speaks for itself, many of us may be unaware of the respected, peer-reviewed journals that contain relevant articles. Journals distributed by

the American Psychological Association (APA) and its divisions are always a good place to start. Additionally, there are topic-specific journals, such as the *Journal of Homosexuality*, *Journal of Bisexuality*, *Journal of Sex Research*, *Journal of Sex Education and Therapy*, *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy*, and *Sex Roles*. For additional assistance, APA's Public Interest Directorate's Healthy Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students Project web site has a searchable database (<http://www.apa.org/pi/hlgb/>).

### *Integrate LGBTQQI topics into your course material*

Most topics can be easily transformed or modified to be LGBTQQI-inclusive. Additionally, some have special significance for LGBTQQI people (e.g., prejudice). Regardless of whether you choose specialized topics or modify existing ones, every field of psychology has produced peer-reviewed material related and relevant to the LGBTQQI population. Here are some potential applications that can be expanded with the assistance of major database searches (e.g., PsycInfo, ERIC, MEDLINE).

Social psychology courses can address issues such as stigma and prejudice, stereotyping, and heterosexual privilege; abnormal psychology classes can address how suicide impacts LGBTQQI people, especially youth. In developmental psychology classes, in utero development of intersexual people and sexual identity development readily fit; psychology of gender courses can easily tailor a discussion of sex/gender role development toward LGBTQQI issues. Family psychology courses can incorporate material and discussion related to gay parenting. Even the upper-level, more traditional science-oriented courses can be inclusive. For example, cognitive psychology classes can include the issue of risk-taking behavior in LGBTQQI people, physiological psychology courses can review relevant brain development studies in the course readings, and perception classes can address research on auditory differences between gay and straight people. Additionally, psychopharmacology courses can incorporate discussion about the use of drugs and alcohol in LGBTQQI communities and individuals.

### *Establish a supportive climate with your syllabus*

The first introduction students often have to a course and to the professor is through the syllabus. As a result, this is an excellent opportunity to reach LGBTQQI students and set a tone for the course (i.e., an inclusive, safe environment). One way to set this tone is via an explicit, inclusive diversity statement in the syllabus and to go over it on the first day of class. The syllabus can also be an opportunity to provide links to campus and community support systems and resources (e.g., LGBTQQI-friendly student groups).

### *Develop inclusive assignments*

Course assignments are another obvious strategy for incorporating LGBTQQI topics and individuals into the course. Some possibilities include critical reviews of articles relevant to LGBTQQI people or areas of study, interviewing an LGBTQQI psychologist or researcher, reviewing a popular media's depiction of LGBTQQI issues/people and assessing how it meshes with the available research, and requiring writing assignments to be sensitive in terms of language usage. Professors can also include examples of LGBTQQI research topics so that students know that these are acceptable and important issues for further study when students have an option to select a research topic.

## Subtle Strategies for Use Inside the Classroom

### *Use the LGBTQQI acronym*

Although certainly a mouthful, use of the initials LGBTQQI when discussing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersexual people demonstrates to students that the course is inclusive of all sexual minorities, not only the traditionally referred to LGB portion. In the use of the initials, it is also important to highlight that these are self-identified labels. As such, individuals who self-identify as LGBTQQI do not necessarily have to meet typical or generally accepted operational definitions of LGBTQQI. This last point is especially important when reviewing and critiquing research, noting the importance of both the self-identification issue and intergroup and intragroup differences that may be present.

### *Use inclusive language when describing relationships*

Another subtle way to increase the inclusiveness of the classroom is by avoiding the identification of relational factors in narrow ways. Here are several examples and factors to consider.

"Partner." This relational term ensures the applicability of your examples to dyadic relationships that are same-sex, opposite-sex, or intersex.

"Their relationship." The use of this phrase refuses to identify the governmental, social, or religious sanctioning of the relationship. Using relational terms like marriage, civil union, and domestic partnership suggest to the listeners that these relationships hold more value than those that have not been sanctioned. The use of "their" also does not indicate the number of partners in the relationship, a reminder that not all relationships are dyadic.

Closed/open and polyamorous relationships. The nonassumption of monogamy is important since a segment of the population (neither exclusive to nor definitive of LGBTQQI people) does not define their intimate/sexual relationships as exclusive of other people or potential partners.

Keep in mind that just because a person's primary intimate/sexual relationship is with someone of the same sex does not mean the person is homosexual (e.g., the person could be bisexual). Sexual orientation is not defined by a partner's gender or even the presence of a partner.

In general, open discussion of the impact of language is never a bad thing. This type of discussion can include not only the issues of a label's denotation and connotation but also the issue of stigma brought about through labels. Additional language strategies can include switching gender/orientation of the typical examples used in lecture and making a point to include LGBTQQI examples throughout lectures.

Regardless of the subtlety of the strategy, LGBTQQI students will see our efforts toward fostering an inclusive environment. Certainly the keyword here is "effort." Although all of these attempts may not be well received, if we are willing to learn and are genuinely concerned, it will show in our openness to questions and our own questions. Shaping a discussion through a simple question like, "How might this be applicable to LGBTQQI individuals in a similar situation?" can set a tone for a class. On the whole, subtle strategies may be easier to incorporate into the curriculum when teaching in an environment that may not be receptive to the inclusion of these topics (e.g., socially conservative administrations and student bodies).

## Strategies for Use Outside the Classroom

### *Use visual strategies*

Our office doors are an extension of our personalities. They are the first clue to faculty openness to LGBTQQI people. As a result, having a welcoming office door "speaks" volumes. Displaying a rainbow sticker and LGBTQQI-related information (e.g., campus events, Coming Out Day celebration activities, Pride Month activities for your area) can go a long way to putting LGBTQQI people at ease. Depending on the receptivity of your colleagues, a welcoming departmental office door and building bulletin board may also prove useful.

### *Sponsor Psychology Club and Psi Chi activities*

Sometimes all it takes is a nudge from a group's faculty advisor to set the wheels in motion. Encouraging discipline-related groups to sponsor LGBTQQI-related activities can go a long way, and many of the in-class activities described earlier (e.g., invited speakers from LGBTQQI-related community groups and organizations) can also be used for these gatherings.

### *Involve your department*

Many of the strategies already mentioned can be adopted at the departmental level. For example, departmental web pages can display not only a departmental diversity statement that is inclusive of sexual minorities, but it can also contain links to related resources. If the department is not ready for this level of openness/inclusion, individual faculty members' web pages are a perfect alternative. Potential links include APA's Public Interest Directorate - Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns (<http://www.apa.org/pi/lgb/>); APA's Division 44 - Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues (<http://www.apadivision44.org/>); and APA's Public Interest Directorate's Healthy Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students Project (<http://www.apa.org/pi/hlgb/>). Your state or regional psychological organization may also be potential resources. For example, Georgia Psychological Association's Division H - Sexual Orientation Issues and California Psychological Association's Division VII - Public Interest has a subdivision devoted to LGBTQQI issues.

"Wow! That's a Lot of Stuff! I Can't Do All of That!"

The strategies noted earlier are suggestions and possibilities. Although it would be exhausting to become "inclusive" overnight (or even over one semester or academic year), small steps toward inclusiveness go a long way. As a result, we suggest picking just one of the strategies for the current semester. Incorporate that strategy into your class, web page, or class/club activity. Next semester, add one more. As your comfort level rises with each class discussion and each activity included, the impact will become even more apparent. Additionally, small but deliberate steps may be better received in more conservative environments. Regardless, all of these methods communicate to LGBTQQI students, allies, and nonallies that LGBTQQI people not only have a place at the table but also are welcome at the table.

## Note

An earlier version of this chapter was presented at a symposium at the Reaching Out: Best Practices in Teaching Diversity and International Perspectives Across the Psychology Curriculum conference in Atlanta, Georgia in October 2006.

# Eat Your FIBER: How to Help Students Digest Psychological Science

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One of our most difficult and rewarding quests as teachers of psychology is to get students hooked on science. Our success in this regard is not only possible, but is likely if we present and package psychological science in a digestible format. Despite the common tendency to describe studies in APA style (i.e., introduction, method, results, and discussion), there are actually a plethora of ways to present psychological research to our students, each with varying aims and goals.

Fiber has been defined as the coarse fibrous substance in grains, fruits, and vegetables that aid digestion and clean out the intestines. It is a major component of plants' supporting and strengthening tissue; it also refers to a person's strength of character. In my view, science is the fiber of psychology. It is a major component of any psychology course and it forms the supporting structure or "strength" of our discipline. In this chapter, I discuss the "FIBER" approach, a mnemonic that captures 5 different and complementary approaches for optimizing students' engagement in the science of psychology.

### The FIBER Approach

*F = Follow-Up*

After presenting an interesting study to students but before explaining the results, instructors can ask students to design a follow-up investigation to answer lingering questions about the present study's findings. This approach can be used with virtually any research study. My personal favorite has been Adams, Wright, and Lohr (1996), who used pornography and plethysmography to support a popular theory on the causes of homophobia. Adams and colleagues concluded: "The results of this study indicate that individuals who score in the homophobic range and admit negative affect toward homosexuality demonstrate significant sexual arousal to male homosexual erotic stimuli... Another possible explanation is found in various psychoanalytic theories, which have generally explained homophobia as a threat to an individual's own homosexual impulses causing repression, denial, or reaction formation... These data are consistent with these notions (pp. 443-444)."

Rather than asking students to discuss these results, I ask them the following question: How would you design a follow-up to the Adams et al. (1996) study? This encourages students to engage in higher-level thinking, which includes an explanation of the study's results and goes beyond it.

### *I = Incomplete*

Instructors can also present incomplete findings without a supporting theory and students can be asked to integrate the results. In other words, instructors can present two or more findings from psychological science and students have to generate a theory from the results or make sense of conflicting findings. For instance, I present two different studies (Florian, Mikulincer, & Hirschberger, 2002; Landau et al., 2004) and students figure out what the studies have in common, i.e., derive a theory that could explain these two different research results. Both studies employ the same independent variable (mortality salience) by asking the experimental group to "describe the emotions that the thought of your own death arouses in you," whereas the control group writes about physical pain instead of death. In the first study (Florian et al., 2002), the dependent variable is the level of commitment the participant has toward their current romantic relationship, which increases in the mortality salience condition. In the second study (Landau et al., 2004), the dependent variable is whether the participant intended to vote for Bush or Kerry in the 2004 presidential election. In the mortality salience condition only, participants at a New York liberal arts college were significantly more likely to vote for George W. Bush.

After presenting these results in brief, I ask my students: How would you explain the results of the Landau et al. (2004) and Florian et al. (2002) studies? In other words, why does thinking about our own death increase our stated commitment to our relationship as well as our endorsement of George W. Bush? The answer lies in terror management theory, which states that we protect ourselves from the fear of our inevitable mortality by investing in our culture, e.g., our romantic partner or our acting president, especially when the president offers strong support for the annihilation of competing cultures.

Another way professors can employ the "incomplete" approach is to give students seemingly contrasting findings to consider. For example, until recently, scientific evidence and the popular press agreed on one cause of eating disorders, namely dieting (e.g., Brewerton, Dansky, Kilpatrick, & O'Neil, 2000; <http://www.cnn.com/2007/HEALTH/01/01/diet.girls.magazines.ap/>). After discussing this "common sense" notion, instructors can give students a 5-page journal article to read (Presnell & Stice, 2003) that describes an experiment in which dieting actually helped decrease eating disorder symptoms. Students can be asked to discuss or write about why these opposite findings may both be true. One answer is that fad dieting is usually unsuccessful and overly restrictive, resulting in rebound eating disorder symptoms. On the other hand, the diet in Presnell and Stice (2003) was based on the LEARN program for weight management, which promotes healthy lifestyle and reasonable eating patterns (see <http://www.thelifestylecompany.com/>).

### *B = Backwards*

In some cases, it is valuable for instructors to present research results before discussing relevant theory, especially if the theory emerged from the data. Two of the most famous studies in the history of psychology (Milgram, 1963; Zimbardo, 1971) are actually backwards research designs in which the theory was derived from the research data rather than the other way around. In presenting these studies backwards, students can see an interesting finding before they understand why it happened, and they can also learn that scientific discovery can move in either direction.

For example, in my class I begin by quoting Milgram (1963, p. 371): "Obedience, as a determinant of our behavior, is of particular relevance to our time. It has been reliably established that from 1933 to 1945 millions of innocent persons were systematically

slaughtered on command. Gas chambers were built, death camps were guarded, daily quotas of corpses were produced with the same efficiency as the manufacture of appliances. These inhumane policies may have originated in the mind of a single person, but they could only have been carried out on a massive scale if a very large number of people obeyed orders." I then ask students the following questions: (a) What percentage of participants do you think would obey these commands? and (b) How high in shock level (15-450 V) would you go? After presenting the actual results, I ask: (c) Why did most participants obey even though they thought they were hurting someone? In this way, students are following in Milgram's footsteps as they try to predict the results and then develop a theory to explain why so many people obeyed fully. Zimbardo's (1971) Stanford Prison Experiment (<http://www.prisonexp.org>) is another "backwards" research design in which Zimbardo himself was shocked by the actual results and thus terminated the experiment after 6 instead of 14 days. Students can be asked to predict and then explain these results.

### *E = Experiential*

One of the most effective ways for students to understand science is for them to participate in a research study in class and then reflect on the experience. The horoscope demonstration (Ward & Grasha, 1986) is a quick "experiment" that can be completed in about 10 minutes and is designed to test whether horoscopes can actually predict students' personality.

I have also designed my own class experiment wherein students are randomly assigned to rate either of the following two personal ads (labeled Version A or Version B). Version A: Single female, blonde hair, attractive, into nature and hiking, likes to cook and travel, seeks partner who's sporty and healthy OR Single male, wealthy, very active, into sports and travel, seeking adventure. Version B of the ad is exactly the same as Version A, except that the evolutionarily charged words are removed (i.e., the word "attractive" for females and "wealthy" for males).

Before discussing evolutionary psychology in my personality course, I perform the personal ad experiment so that half of my students receive each form (Version A or Version B ads) along with a rating scale assessing how much they like the person in the ad that is most relevant to their sexual preference. I then debrief students by having them look at other people's forms and asking them to consider why the group means might be different. I analyze the numbers in class and we discuss whether we replicated one of the fundamental tenets of evolutionary psychology, which is the existence of differential mate selection strategies by gender (Buss, 1989).

### *R = Real world*

One of the best ways to engage students in psychological science quickly is to make its real-world applications crystal clear from the onset. For instance, the two famous studies discussed above (Milgram and Zimbardo) can both be readily applied to current world events, such as genocide and Abu Ghraib. Often, I present a real-world concept before I present the scientific study, and only later do I connect the two. For example, I show a video clip about the Boston Red Sox infamous "curse of the Bambino," which refers to the idea that the Red Sox baseball team was cursed for trading Babe Ruth (a.k.a. the Bambino), and would thus never win a World Series title. This leads into a discussion of superstition, including students' own superstitious beliefs, which serves as a backdrop to my presentation of Skinner's (1948) classic study about how superstitious behaviors can be conditioned by random reinforcement.

## Conclusion

FIBER is a mnemonic that captures 5 different ways to get students excited when learning about psychological research in any class. Regardless of the classes you teach, explaining research from a multitude of angles keeps your students interested, provides options for different styles of learners, models how science moves forward, and shows the interplay among experience, theory, and empirical research.

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## Teaching Psychology Online: Approaching Excellence and Avoiding Defeat

**Marcel S. Kerr**

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**I**t is now a rhetorical question to ask whether students learn effectively via online instruction. We have over ten years of observations, personal experiences, and well-designed research inquiries that demonstrate that online students learn as well as their face-to-face counterparts. In some cases, they even out-perform them.

Now that we know students can learn effectively online, other questions emerge. Do all students succeed online? If not, who does and who does not? Can all disciplines be taught online, or are certain courses better suited than others? And if two different instructors develop and teach an online course on the same subject and one is a success and the other an utter failure, what are the factors that led to the disparate outcomes? I address these questions by focusing on what we know about teaching postsecondary psychology courses online. Specifically, the questions and solutions are discussed in relation to four issues: individual student characteristics, course or program level, instructional design, and level and type of interaction.

### Consider Individual Student Characteristics

Two thirds of the variance predicting college success is accounted for by student characteristics (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; 2005). It is reasonable to assume that this speaks true of online students as well. In fact, I argue that online students are more diverse in terms of what they bring to the classroom, making individual characteristics even greater predictors of student success. Whereas we cannot control students' personal characteristics, we need to understand how they may impact their learning experiences.

From a four-year investigation (Kerr, Ryneearson, & Kerr, 2003), we learned that the most prevalent characteristics that lead to successful online learning include: (a) reading and writing skills, (b) motivation, (c) independent learning, (d) technology skills, and (e) adult learner characteristics. First, adequate reading and writing skills are paramount for success in the online classroom. Regardless of the advances in instructional technology and multi-media, text remains one of the most effective means of exchanging information for learning. Likewise, effective online courses make use of optimal interaction, which includes synchronous (e.g., live chats) and asynchronous (e.g., email and discussion boards) methods. Both require proficiency in expressing oneself in writing.

Second, effective online learners are high in internal and achievement motivation. These students take the initiative in the online classroom, plan ahead, and are actively engaged in their learning. Motivated students are also self-directed, do not have to rely on others to interpret or complete assignments, and are accountable for their own learning. Fourth, sufficient technology skills are necessary for online learning success, but online instructors and researchers have found that most online courses require a

minimum skill set, and if motivated, novice online students ramp up their needed technology skills quickly. The minimum skill set includes the ability to browse the Internet, send and receive email with attachments, and employ appropriate "netiquette" in the classroom discussion forums (<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>).

Finally, the student characteristics that have received the most empirical attention are those of the adult learner (Knowles, 1998). Online instruction that meets adults' learning needs is effective instruction that requires them to draw upon their personal and professional experiences, encourages them to solve real life problems, and allows them to construct meaning from their assignments (Driscoll, 2002).

### Determine Course or Program Level

Most psychology professors agree that teaching first-year students requires different strategies than teaching upper division students. Likewise, there are instructional differences between teaching upper division undergraduate and graduate students. Educational research suggests that first-year students lack many of the requisite skills and characteristics previously discussed (i.e., adequate reading and writing skills, independent learning, self-direction; NCPPHE, 2006), leaving them ill-prepared for the demands of online learning. This trend leaves me to believe first-year students need face-to-face instruction with professors who are knowledgeable of their learning preferences and sensitive to their developing needs.

With this caveat, I contend that all psychology courses can be taught online effectively. My reasoning, in part, is due to the fact that psychology courses of all types and levels have been taught online for years. The successful ones are those that carefully match online technologies to course objectives and requirements. For example, instructors of lower-level courses (i.e., general psychology) with large enrollments find that automated quizzes allow them to provide learners with several criterion-referenced tests. The quizzes are auto-graded and provide students with instant feedback on their individual and class performance. These features result in reduced grading for instructors and increased opportunities to improve performance for students.

Upper-level courses that require research and APA writing work well online. Student papers can be submitted and graded electronically. Instructors can insert edits, comments, and grading rubrics, and then return graded papers to students with ease. With electronic submission, instructors can submit student papers to online plagiarism detection services (i.e., <http://mydropbox.com/> or <http://turnitin.com/>) and receive an objective report to assist them in academic integrity cases. The Internet also facilitates upper division courses by allowing instructors to post and share articles online securely, providing students with access to academic search engines and online journal databases that provide full-text articles.

Yes, even statistics is being taught online successfully. In fact, it is my favorite online course to teach. Most statistics instructors have heard the following student claim: "Dr. Anova, I understand the problems when you work them on the board, but when I get home, I get stuck or miss a step." Streaming video technologies allow instructors to record themselves solving computations and upload them in a format that does not take up a ton of server space. This allows students to watch the problem solution over and over until they get it right.

Finally, professional graduate coursework can be taught effectively and enhanced with online technologies as well. Internship and practicum courses benefit from the tracking features of online technologies. Both on- and off-site supervisors can log time and duties completed, require student interaction via discussion forums, and host live meetings with geographically-separated students in chat rooms. Counseling courses that

require small group work and role-playing benefit from these features as well because both discussion and chat forums will time and date stamp each participant's comments, providing a detailed transcript that records who said what and when. These transcripts are available all term and are an excellent resource for record-keeping, post-course reference, and evaluation of student learning.

### Apply Best Practices in Instructional Design

Outside what the student brings to the classroom, the number one predictor of student performance is instruction. Regardless of learning modality, good teaching is good teaching. Effective online instructors identify and adhere to a proven instructional model. The models that have demonstrated effective online student learning are constructivist in nature. It is from the constructivist approach that we get the term "student-centered." Additionally, in designing online courses, the content and materials need to be organized, thorough, and accurate. Likewise, instructors need to be flexible, proactive, and understand that often - less is better.

Furthermore, effective online instruction embraces the shift from linear toward non-linear learning. An example of linear learning is our historical use of textbooks. We take in information, page by page, in a serial process until the last page is read. The information age has produced an onslaught of non-linear examples, such as web pages. Web pages provide information in various formats, chunking information for easier and quicker access. On a single web page there may be tables of text arranged in columns, hyperlinks for jumping within text, and menu buttons for external links. There are multiple navigation options to facilitate user ease, flash animation, streaming video clips, and embedded search engines.

Because of the success of these designs, we now see these "web" features displayed on our televisions as our news screens now depict side bars, ads, future viewings, and ticker tapes that let us see if our mutual funds and favorite sports teams are winning or losing. Frankly, there is not enough time in a lifetime to take it all in, so "reading the last page first" has become an effective problem solving strategy.

To meet this generation of online students "where they are," online course developers may employ a number of strategies: (a) break dense paragraphs of text into smaller sections for swifter visual digestion, (b) highlight or bold instructions, due dates, and information that is needed often, (c) provide at least two forms of navigation that avoid dead ends, i.e., where the BACK button must be employed to return to an important page, (d) test pages and links often to ensure they are working, and (e) design and deliver content and feedback in the same manner throughout the term. Consistency of design and delivery reduces student anxiety, prevents instructor errors, and allows students to have accurate expectations of the course early on.

### Select Level and Type of Interaction

Currently, the biggest criticism of online learning from both instructors and students is the lack of human touch. It is very hard to convey online the nonverbal aspects that define us. Unless streaming video is used excessively, tone of voice, hand gestures, facial expressions, and humor are altogether missing in cyber space. Though a legitimate concern, we have learned how to approximate and incorporate these nonverbal skills into our writing. The human relations element inherent in successful face-to-face classes is produced online via the amount, type, and levels of interaction. In general, there are three ways that interactions occur in any classroom, virtual or otherwise. Students

interact with the instructor, they interact with the material, and they interact with other students.

To enhance online interaction, instructors can: (a) provide an open discussion area that encourages informal student discussion, (b) create weekly discussion assignments that require a response to the instructor's prompt as well as responses to classmates that lend unique contributions to the thread, (c) encourage students to work together on assignments and provide access to chat rooms so that they can meet in real time, (d) specify a consistent convention for posting questions and answers (i.e., discussion) so that students can help each other, and (e) participate regularly in all discussions and provide students with feedback on assignments regularly and in less than one week after assignment deadlines.

### Future Directions

Our work is not done. Learners at all levels continue to need online education alternatives, so how can we best help learners to succeed online? We need to develop and implement tutorials and student services in the space between student self-assessment and enrollment in the first online course. Preliminary results suggest that instructors' use of verbal immediacy yields improved performance and higher student satisfaction. True experimental designs are needed to determine the real impact verbally immediate behaviors have on student outcomes. Our online journey continues. I hope you've picked up a few tools here to help you craft and convey your personal web presence.

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## Some Thoughts About Teaching Issues of Culture in Psychology

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### What is Culture?

One of the major conceptual issues one faces as a researcher or teacher dealing with culture concerns one's definition of culture. Over the years the most common definition of culture is something like "a shared system of socially transmitted behavior that describes, defines, and guides people's ways of life, communicated from one generation to the next." I myself have based much of my work until now on such a definition (Matsumoto, 2000).

A limitation of this type of definition, however, is that it is applicable to all social animals. After all, fish swim in schools, wolves hunt in packs, lions roam in prides, bees communicate sources of food to each other, and even birds build nests and have nest eggs! Many social animals build relationships between themselves and the community; differentiate between in-groups and out-groups; negotiate issues concerning status, power, dominance, and hierarchy within groups; and distribute tasks.

Thus, culture as typically defined is not a uniquely human product. But certainly there are some things unique about human culture. I believe that the unique aspects of human culture are rooted in uniquely human abilities, which include language; the ability to know that oneself and others are intentional agents (Tomasello, 1999); and the reflective ability to know that others can make judgments of oneself, and to know that others know that you can make such judgments of them (Goffman, 1959; Tomasello). Humans also have the unique ability to continually improve on discoveries known as the ratcheting effect (Tomasello, Kruger, & Ratner, 1993).

These abilities differentiate human social and cultural life from that of animals in three important ways: complexity, differentiation, and institutionalization. Human social and cultural life is much more complex than other animals. We are members of multiple groups, each having its own purpose, hierarchy, and networking system. Human cultures evolved to help us deal with larger and more complex social groups. To deal with this complexity, humans make greater differentiations in their social lives, and institutionalize much of it. One of the functions of human culture is to give meaning to this social complexity.

Given this, I define human culture as a unique meaning and information system, shared by a group and transmitted across generations, that allows the group to meet basic needs of survival, coordinate socially to achieve a viable existence, transmit social behavior, pursue happiness and well-being, and derive meaning from life (Matsumoto, in press; Matsumoto & Juang, in press). The meanings conveyed help us to meet others to procreate and produce offspring, put food on the table, provide shelter from the elements, and care for our daily biological essentials.

But human culture is much more than that. It helps us to create and maintain social systems, create beliefs about the world, and communicate the meaning system to other humans and subsequent generations (Matsumoto, in press). It allows for complex social networks and relationships, enhancing the meaning of normal, daily activities. It allows us to be creative in music, art, and drama and work; and to seek recreation, engage in sports, and organize competitions, whether in the local community little league or the Olympic Games. It allows us to search the sea and space, and to create mathematics, as well as an educational system. It allows us to go to the moon, to create a research laboratory on Antarctica, and send probes to Mars and Jupiter. Unfortunately, it also allows us to have wars, create nuclear weapons, and recruit and train terrorists.

Given this definition, culture is not race, ethnicity, or nationality. But culture gives these social constructs and others (e.g., sexual orientation, disabilities) meaning. Moreover, cultures around the world can be very similar in some respects, and very different in others. Thus, when talking about culture, it's a good idea to think about the meaning systems involved, where they come from, and similarities as well as differences with other cultures around the world.

### The Complexity of Explaining Behavior Across Cultures

One of the problems we have to deal with as teachers of psychology concerns how students deal with issues of diversity. Too often, many class presentations about culture emphasize differences more than similarities. Cultures, however, help to produce both similarities and differences. Typical work on culture often also seems to imply (maybe not overtly) that "American" perspectives are the norm and other cultural perspectives are "unusual" or "outliers." Thus, it's a challenge to get students (and sometimes researchers!) to realize that they have unconscious cultural blinders that all too often lead them to make value judgments that are inappropriate.

Here's what usually happens. We observe differences in what we would normally expect in people who appear physically different than ourselves. We then typically interpret these differences as cultural differences.

Our interpretations may be correct; in fact, those differences may indeed be culture. But, our interpretations may be wrong. Incorrect interpretations occur because of biases we have when interpreting the behavior of others. For one, psychologists have a love of differences. In research, there is a bias in the political nature of publishing similarities vs. differences in psychological research; it's easier to publish differences. When researchers attribute observed differences between people of different races, nationalities, ethnic groups, or any such participant variable to culture without empirical justification, I have called this attributional bias the cultural attribution fallacy (Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006).

In reality, the sources of motivation for human behavior are complex. In a recent paper, I outlined three sources of such motivation: basic human nature, which includes dispositions, cognitive abilities, and universal psychological processes we are born with; culture, including unique situational meanings, social roles, and norms; and personality and individual differences, including role identities, narratives, values, and aggregate role experiences (Matsumoto, in press). Undoubtedly there are other sources of behavior as well, and all of these contribute to producing the kinds of differences in individual and group behavior that we observe in our everyday lives or research.

We understand this level of complexity when explaining our own or our group's behaviors. Maybe this is because we have more intimate knowledge of the importance of all of these processes compared to people or groups we don't know. Or perhaps we have a bias in the way we want to interpret our own behaviors compared to others. Whatever

the reason, we often forget this complexity when we interpret the behaviors of others, and are often too quick in interpreting differences as culturally rooted.

One of the goals of understanding the relationship between culture and psychology is to understand the complexity of the sources of human motivation for any and all, and to learn how to apply that complexity when interpreting the behavior of others as well as ourselves. When students (and researchers) continue to just interpret all group differences as cultural, it may serve only to promulgate stereotypes about people, which is ironic because one of the goals of cultural psychology is to break down the power of stereotypes in describing people rigidly.

### What Are We Teaching?

It's not easy to get students to delve into this complexity. The traditional approach in academia is to teach them about culture. When we do this, we should teach not solely cultural differences, but cultural similarities as well. If we understand culture from an environmental adaptational framework, then it is easy to see how there can be both cultural similarities and differences. I believe that understanding the basis of similarities among people and groups, along with differences, provides all of us with a common basis from which to understand each other.

That kind of traditional academic teaching involves knowledge-based outcomes, which are definitely important. But, research I have done over the years also suggests that another very important outcome to consider is emotion regulation (Matsumoto, Yoo, & LeRoux, in press). Emotion regulation is the ability to manage and modify one's emotional reactions in order to achieve constructive, desirable outcomes. It's clear from the research that, if individuals are to adapt and adjust well in dynamic, multicultural environments, they need a psychological engine that enables them to deal with the inevitable stresses that occur. Emotion regulation is part of that engine.

Traditional didactic courses that impart knowledge may not necessarily affect students' emotion regulation skills. Instead, emotion regulation, and other psychological skills, are probably best taught in experiential-based learning. This means that teachers who are interested in these kinds of student outcomes may need to create opportunities for students to have real-life experiences with real-life emotions. This could be achieved by incorporating role-plays, simulations, in-class activities, and out-of-class activities that expose students to differences that provoke emotional reactions. Informed faculty would then need to guide students in constructing, and reconstructing, their emotional experiences so as to get a better handle on them, which should then open the door to greater range of cognitive knowledge stores. This means, of course, that faculty need to be comfortable in doing so, which may require the same kind of development on the part of the faculty.

In any case, I believe we need to give strong consideration to bolstering our typically knowledge-based approaches to teaching culture by (a) teaching similarities as well as differences, and (b) incorporating experiential-based learning that will impact emotion regulation. The question, of course, is what do we want our students to learn, and how can we deliver?

### Conclusion

Culture is one of the most important and fascinating topics to emerge in recent years in psychology, and we have only scratched the surface in terms of understanding it and its relationship with mental processes and behavior. Given that our world is increasingly pluralistic and multiculturally diverse, it's important for us to continue to be on the

cutting edge of knowledge and teaching in this area, so that our students can emerge as more informed voyagers of the world who have some practical skills in engaging with the complexity of a diverse life. Our ability to understand, appreciate, respect, and interact with people of very diverse cultures, lifestyles, and belief systems has implications not only for how we deal with our friends, neighbors, work colleagues, and strangers, but also with other countries and cultures. Dealing with culture is a major challenge not only on a local scale, but also on a global scale, and can mean the difference between war and peace. Hopefully, all of us, in our own ways, can help to make the world a better place through our teachings about culture to our students, and in our daily lives.

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## Encouraging Academic Honesty through Active Plagiarism Instruction and Prevention

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*College of DuPage*

There comes a time in every teacher's career when they question their students' academic honesty. It may be a wandering eye during an exam, a suspicious cell phone call, or a feeling of déjà vu when reading a paper. Sometimes the signs are subtle and create a sense of uncertainty; at other times they are blatant attempts to submit the work of another as one's own. I recently faced an incident of the latter variety in one of my classes. A student submitted an answer to a take-home essay question that was copied word-for-word from the instructor's manual, including the "etc." at the end of the response. As my anger subsided, the dread of confrontation took over. I did my best to put emotions aside and use problem solving skills to develop a plan for handling this difficult situation. I began by speaking to colleagues in the English department and consulting resources compiled by my college's librarians (see Kickels, 2006). I met with the Vice President of Student Affairs, the academic officer charged with adjudicating violations of the academic honesty policy. I re-read posts on plagiarism on the Society for Teachers of Psychology discussion list, PsychTeacher, and read numerous articles on the subject. My research not only contributed to a successful resolution of this case; it also provided me with a variety of tools for preventing, detecting, and punishing plagiarism in my classes.

### "Not in My Classroom"

Admitting that there is a problem is the first step towards remediation. Of course, teachers of psychology are aware of the existence of plagiarism. Ease of access to online term papers and information suggests that plagiarism is not only a problem, but is on the rise. A "Google" search of the term produced millions of hits on the topic with links to academic institutions, professional journals, and the popular press. A recent search of the PsychTeacher database identified 230 posts with "plagiarism" in the subject line. Internet detection services, such as turnitin.com, are flourishing. Why would I suggest that teachers are in denial?

Denial of the existence of plagiarism is not the problem; denial of its existence in your classroom is the problem. Data collected through a web-based survey addressing the academic honesty of over 40,000 students representing 68 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada reveal that, "...51 percent [of students reporting] have acknowledged at least one incident of serious cheating on written work... [and] four out of every five students who reported they had cheated on a written assignment acknowledged that they had engaged in some form of Internet-related cheating" (McCabe, 2005, p. 29). Conversely, a survey of faculty members in eight departments of Auburn University found that faculty members estimate a lower percentage of plagiarism nationwide (29%), and even lower estimates within their own departments (18%) and

classrooms (11%) (Liddell & Fong, 2005). A study conducted on my campus reported similar results. Of 173 faculty members responding to a question that asked how often they thought plagiarism occurred in their classes, 27% responded “rarely,” 46% responded “occasionally,” and 23% responded “often” (Zoomerang, 2005). Hard, Conway, and Moran (2006) compared students’ self report of their own academic honesty with their estimates of peer behavior and faculty estimates of student dishonesty. Faculty estimates, as in prior research, were significantly lower than both students’ self report and peer estimates. Additionally, Hard et al. identified a significant positive correlation between faculty estimates of student dishonesty and faculty intervention efforts.

These findings suggest that teachers’ denial and/or underestimating the incidence of plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty may result in a lack of prevention and intervention strategies in their classes. Keith-Spiegel, Tabachnick, Whitley, and Washburn (1998) identified several additional consequences of faculty denial of academic dishonesty in their classrooms and subsequent inaction, including: a lack of equality in awarding grades, the creation of a perception that dishonesty is acceptable, the lowering of student morale, and the reduction of the value of our degrees.

### A Call to Action

The evidence is compelling; denial is not an option. It is our duty as teachers of psychology to do something. But, what? I am a teacher; not a disciplinarian. Research suggests that teaching is what is needed to prevent plagiarism in your classes (Barry, 2006; Landau, Druen, & Arcuri, 2002).

Good teaching begins with a clarification of terminology and an operational definition. Submitting the work of another as one’s own is not at issue here. Students and teachers alike know that this is plagiarism. It is intentional theft and deception and should be punished accordingly. However, the more subtle, unintentional forms of plagiarism may not be as easy to operationalize. At a workshop presented at the 13th Annual Midwest Institute for Students and Teachers of Psychology, Drew Appleby and I (Puccio & Appleby, 2006) posed several scenarios adapted from Lathrop and Foss (2000) to the students and teachers in attendance. Everyone agreed that downloading a paper and submitting it as your own without making any changes or turning in a paper written by someone else was plagiarism. Other scenarios, however, did not result in the participants’ unanimity. Scenarios such as paraphrasing by changing some of the words but not the basic sentence structure of the original, using direct quotes with a citation but without quotation marks, and reading someone else’s paper and using some of their ideas, resulted in a spirited discussion.

A review of your institution’s academic honesty policy is a good place to begin the development of your operational definition of plagiarism. The discipline’s position on plagiarism is presented in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2001) is stating:

“Psychologists do not claim the words or ideas of another as their own: they give credit where credit is due. Quotation marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words) you will need to credit the source in the text.” (p. 349)

An assessment device, the plagiarism knowledge survey (PKS) developed by Miguel Roig (1997) may also be useful in developing your operational definition of plagiarism and in providing specific examples of what is and is not considered plagiarism for your students. It includes several examples of paraphrased statements, some of which are

considered plagiarism and others that are correct. Once clarified, make your operational definition of plagiarism public by including it in your syllabus and in assignment instructions.

Research findings suggest that merely informing students about plagiarism does not necessarily yield the desired result; explicit instruction is needed to achieve significant reductions in unintentional plagiarism (Barry, 2006; Landau et al., 2002; Roig, 1997). Giving students feedback on their responses to the PKS and providing examples of plagiarized work along with definitions of plagiarism resulted in significantly higher PKS post-test scores (Landau et al., 2002). Barry (2006) went a step further and incorporated graded paraphrasing practice into her lifespan development course. During a six week period, students were given paragraph length quotes from prominent developmental theorists and were required to both paraphrase the quotes and to provide an appropriate APA style citation. Students were required to complete one paraphrase per week, which was graded according to established criteria. Students participating in this activity scored higher than controls on a post-test assessing their understanding of plagiarism.

In addition to education, plagiarism can be prevented by designing unique, course specific assignments that cannot be easily attained from Internet paper mills; by breaking writing assignments into smaller components submitted throughout the term; and by asking students to submit copies of the materials used in their papers (Sterngold, 2004).

### We Are All Responsible

Plagiarism instruction and prevention is the responsibility of all teachers regardless of discipline (McCabe, 2005). Get involved in academic honesty initiatives on your campus. Discuss plagiarism prevention with your colleagues, including your campus' librarians who are often experts on the topic. Visit websites devoted to academic honesty and plagiarism such as The Center for Academic Integrity at <http://www.academicintegrity.org/> or Central Queensland University's Assessment in Higher Education: Plagiarism website at <http://ahe.cqu.edu.au/plagiarism.htm> for additional resources and suggestions. Finally, report all cases of intentional, blatant plagiarism to the appropriate office on your campus (White, 2005). Campus wide vigilance minimizes multiple offenses and sends the message to our students that academic dishonesty is a serious offense that will not be ignored.

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## Study More! Study Harder! Students' and Teachers' Faulty Beliefs About How People Learn

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**I**n his book, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, Ken Bain (2004) identified and studied a sample of outstanding college teachers. He made this observation about their approaches to teaching:

"[T]he people we analyzed have generally cobbled together from their own experiences working with students conceptions of human learning that are remarkably similar to some ideas that have emerged in the research and theoretical literature on cognition, motivation, and human development" (Bain, 2004, pp. 25-26).

What Bain is saying is that the best college teachers learn through experience what most psychologists typically learn as a matter of course in graduate school. If that is the case, then why aren't psychologists the best teachers of any field? I'm going to argue that the primary reason is that many psychologists fail to apply the psychology of how people learn to their teaching. Somehow we separate the psychological knowledge, theory and skills relevant to understanding the most effective ways to have people learn from the knowledge, theory and skills we use to teach psychology. At the very least, most of us fail to fully apply what we know about learning to our teaching.

I am certainly not exempting myself from this criticism. When I first started teaching, my attitude was summed up in the following way: "Even at its best, teaching can only be an invitation to learn." I believed that my role as a teacher was to present current, accurate information to students in as clear and engaging a way as possible, whether the presentation was through lecture, video, problems, demonstrations or activities. Whether students learned anything was really their responsibility. I searched for teaching tips on how to capture and hold students' interest, such as making the information fun or relevant to their lives. At teaching conferences, I heard about the importance of making learning "active," avoiding lecture, and acting as a facilitator and guide rather than an expert.

The beliefs and practices I learned about reminded me of psychology's radical behaviorist past, with its emphasis on stimulus materials and presentation. The learner really plays a minor role, basically receiving information, following directions, and devoting sufficient study time. Despite the minor role, learners bear most of the responsibility for learning. Students who are struggling in class are told to "study more" and "study harder." Students either need to increase the amount of time or number of repetitions that they study material, or they need to become more engaged and pay closer attention than they currently do. This is certainly good advice for some students, but I often encounter many students who are struggling even though they attend class regularly and devote a great deal of time to study.

As a psychologist, I had nagging doubts about this approach to teaching. Lecture can be engaging and effective under certain circumstances. Discussions can be pointless or worse, serve to reinforce incorrect beliefs. Activities can be fun and engaging but not lead to learning. Work in levels of processing makes clear that just because a learner is active or expends effort is no assurance of better learning. In some cases, it is most effective for the teacher to be the expert while in others the teacher should allow the students to come to their own conclusions.

I could not reconcile the assumptions I made about teaching with what I knew to be true about learning. I realized that teaching requires a mental model of how people learn. Most teachers cannot articulate their model of learning, but they have one. That model determines the teaching methods and approaches we use. The better the model, the more effective the teacher. The more inadequate or flawed the model, the less effective the teacher. Students' behavior, of course, also flows from their models of how people learn. They base their decisions on whether or not they need to go to class, how best to tackle assignments, and how much and in what way they study on how they believe they learn best.

The model of learning I used for teaching was different than the model of learning I used as a psychologist. The former was based on untested assumptions and simplistic beliefs. The latter was informed by research and subject to continuous test and refinement. The two were often in conflict. For example, as psychologists we know more about unintentional learning, persuasion, motivation and social influence than any other field, yet as teachers we often let ourselves believe we have no control over our students' learning behavior.

I do not, however, blame teachers for basing their methods on intuition, because a strong empirical foundation for teaching is still lacking. Historically, most research on human learning has been too simple or artificial to be of much use to teachers. For example, research has generally looked at whether or not simple information is recalled, rather than examining sophisticated comprehension and understanding. Furthermore, until recently there has been little training for teaching in graduate programs. Many new psychology teachers are just as unaware of research related to teaching as teachers in other fields.

In the last 10 years, there has been a proliferation of research that is directly relevant to teaching (e.g., Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999), and much of it challenges commonly held beliefs about teaching and learning.

A common misconception among students is their overconfidence in their mastery of material. In a comprehensive review of student self-assessment, Dunning, Heath, and Suls (2004) reported only a modest correlation between what students believe their level of understanding is and actual exam performance. The correlation is weakest for students in introductory courses but improves for advanced students. Furthermore, the discrepancy is greatest for weaker students who remain grossly overconfident even in the face of repeated contradictory evidence. These are the students who do poorly on an exam and say things like, "But I really thought I knew the material" or "I studied so hard for this test."

Dweck (2002) has demonstrated how a belief that intelligence is a fixed trait, a view often inadvertently reinforced by parents and teachers, can lead to learning avoidance and self-defeating decisions in students. She has shown that changing beliefs to a view that intelligence is a product of effort can improve student performance.

If we want students to be lifelong learners, then making them aware of their own lack of awareness and faulty beliefs should be a priority. An overconfident student feels no need to study or learn, either in school or after graduation. Poor self-assessment and

faulty, malicious beliefs point to the importance of formative assessment and for finding ways to correct these tenacious misconceptions (Chew, 2006a).

A common belief among teachers that has been challenged by research is that the harder students work, the more they will learn. The more they struggle to complete an assignment, the more beneficial it will be. Such a belief is contrary to Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) as described by van Merriënboer and Sweller (2005). CLT states that mental effort or concentration is a limited resource. People possess a limited amount of concentration or mental effort that they can devote to one difficult task or distribute across many simpler tasks. If the combined demand for mental effort, or cognitive load, exceed available mental effort, however, performance suffers.

Any instructional task includes three kinds of cognitive load: intrinsic cognitive load, germane cognitive load, and extraneous cognitive load. Intrinsic cognitive load refers to the minimum amount of mental effort a learner must exert in order to understand a concept. Some concepts are inherently harder to understand, that is, have higher intrinsic load, than others. The intrinsic load is fixed for a learner to master a particular concept. Germane cognitive load is the load imposed by instruction that is relevant to mastering a concept. Different teaching methods impose different levels of germane load. Teachers must optimize germane load (i.e., minimizing load while maximizing learning). Finally, there is extraneous cognitive load, which is the load imposed by activities that are not relevant to mastering a concept. This category includes tangential or irrelevant information from the teacher and any tasks the learner must do in order to complete and activity that aren't relevant to learning. Teachers must minimize extraneous load. It is easy to design activities with combined cognitive load that exceeds the mental effort of students, and few teachers make an effort to manage or optimize it.

Not only must the cognitive demands of instruction not exceed the mental effort of the student, but there must be enough spare mental effort available to allow the student to reflect on and learn from the instruction. Sweller, van Merriënboer, and Paas (1998) reviewed how students may successfully complete an activity and learn nothing from it because all available mental effort was used to complete the task and none was available for learning from the task. But don't students have plenty of mental effort available to them? Not necessarily. Piolat, Thierry, and Kellogg (2005) have shown that note taking, an activity we expect students to do, carries a heavy cognitive load, tantamount to writing an original paper. Therefore, students who are taking notes during instruction have only limited amounts of mental effort available for learning.

We as teachers want our students to think deeply about the material we present. The problem is that deep processing is highly effortful. If students process everything we say deeply, then it is likely that the cognitive load will be too heavy and comprehension of critical information will suffer. Furthermore, not everything we say in class is equally important; some information is central to a concept, some is secondary and some is not intended to be taken seriously at all. Students, however, cannot discriminate among core, tangential and unrelated information. Deep processing of tangential and irrelevant information increases extraneous cognitive load and subtracts from the mental effort available for learning key concepts. When we fail to indicate to students what information they should process deeply and what is tangential, learning of the key concepts suffers (Chew & Baughman, 2006).

We as teachers must realize that sometimes students fail at tasks because of overwhelming cognitive load and not for lack of motivation or effort. Sometimes students can successfully complete a task and learn nothing from it. Because of cognitive load, a more complex activity may be less effective for learning than a simpler one. Finally, we teachers may grossly underestimate the cognitive load of a task because we have so much experience with the task that it has become automatic for us.

We need to think about teaching in psychological terms. I have changed my view from teaching as a matter of engagement and presentation to teaching as a problem in applied psychology (Chew, 2006b). The former is easy, and anyone can do it with minimal training. The latter is so challenging that it takes a whole career to master. We in psychology, more than any other field, should understand how difficult teaching really is.

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## Note

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## Teaching Psychology Using Team-Based Learning

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**W**ouldn't it be terrific if we could require all our students to apply their knowledge of psychology to complex, real-world issues? Sure, if all your classes were small-enrollment, upper-division courses. But many instructors also teach larger enrollment, lower-division classes (e.g., Introductory Psychology) where it can be challenging to go beyond simple "learn and remember" course objectives. In this article, we outline a technique that allows teachers to conduct even large-enrollment, general education courses like a small-enrollment senior seminar: Team-based learning.

Team-based learning (Michaelson, Knight, & Fink, 2004) is a teaching paradigm in which students are assigned to permanent teams and students' grades are based on their performance on individual and team tasks (see <http://www.teambasedlearning.org/>). A given unit begins with a short, multiple-choice Readiness Assessment Test to ensure that students understand basic concepts from the textbook. The rest of the unit is used to complete in-class activities that require students to apply their knowledge to complex problems. Teammates are held accountable for contributing positively to team performance via end-of-term peer evaluations that become part of students' final grades.

The team-based course structure yields a number of positive outcomes. Students must learn basic information from the textbook without the aid of lectures, a skill that is important to life-long learning. They must share their knowledge with their teammates, improving their meta-cognitive and communication skills and increasing their learning (teaching is one of the best learning tools). Teams provide social support and personal connections that can aid in student retention, especially of first-year and first-generation students. In addition, team-based learning requires that students hone their ability to work with other people, one of the "critical competencies" required for personal success (Gardiner, 1994).

Team-based learning allows students to "do psychology" even at the introductory level. For example, because they have the full resources of their team, even students in a fairly large ( $N = 100$ ) Introductory Psychology class can successfully design an experiment. First, teams complete a series of in-class activities to practice the basic elements of experimental design (e.g., sampling, defining variables). After these practice activities, each team designs an original experiment to test a realistic hypothesis about human behavior. This assignment is both a learning assessment and a learning event; by the end of the activity, virtually everyone understands how to design an experiment.

Team-based learning works especially well with assignments that require students to practice higher-level cognitive skills (c.f. Bloom, 1956). For example, in Introductory Psychology a unit on Drugs and the Brain ends with an activity in which each team decides which of the many recreational drugs is the most dangerous. To do so, teams articulate a set of criteria they think are a reasonable way to assess "danger" (e.g., the drug is highly addictive, the drug is readily available) and decide which drug best meets each criterion. Teams then use that information to justify their choice as the most dangerous drug. This assignment requires considerable higher-level thought; students

must consider various ways of defining "dangerous," compare the characteristics of several recreational drugs, and then decide how to combine the criteria to make their choice.

Other units in Introductory Psychology feature similar assignments. The unit on psychological disorders concludes with an activity in which teams evaluate which of the major psychological disorders are the most and the least debilitating. The last activity in the unit on memory and information processing requires teams to decide which cognitive phenomenon best explains people's failure to engage in preventative or maintenance behaviors (e.g., rotating tires, flossing teeth daily). The semester culminates in an activity in which teams decide which single concept from the course is the best explanation for why people perform maladaptive behaviors and fail to perform adaptive behaviors.

By now, you might find team-based learning appealing but may be reluctant to try it because of the negative experiences you may have had with group assignments. Many of those negative experiences are attributable to poor group formation, poor activities, or both. Team-based learning provides explicit guidelines to overcome both problems.

Proper team formation avoids a number of common problems with group work. The instructor should form teams of 5-7 students at the beginning of the term with the express goal of maximizing the differences among students within each team. Although this guideline might seem counter-intuitive, think about working with a team of your clones. The team would have exactly the same strengths and liabilities as the individual. Instead, teams comprising individuals with different skills, experiences, and backgrounds will have a wider range of resources and a smaller set of shared liabilities than any given individual.

We form teams by asking students to join a single line using criteria that are relevant to success in the course or in academics generally (e.g., Have you taken a psychology course before? Are you bilingual?). Having formed the line, the students count off in rounds of however many teams there are to be: If there are to be six groups then the first six people in the line are the first members of each of those teams. This procedure effectively separates students who share a particular characteristic into different teams.

Well-constructed team activities are also critical because, in many ways, the quality of team activities determines the quality of team interactions: Good activities foster team cohesion, require students to work together (rather than subdividing a task), and require students to apply course material to challenging problems. In general, good assignments have the three characteristics outlined next.

### Same Question

Every team should work on the same question or problem concurrently. For example, instead of having different teams design an experiment to test different hypotheses, all the teams should test the same hypothesis. Whether they converge on different solutions or the same solution via different routes, teams will be better able to critically discuss each other's work if they are working on the same thing.

### Specific Choice

The product of any assignment should be a specific choice (e.g., Which recreational drug is the most dangerous?) rather than something more extensive (e.g., Compare and contrast the physiological and psychological effects of cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin). In other words, assignments should maximize the amount of processing the team must do but minimize the size of the final product. Assignments that require a large

final product (e.g., a paper or oral presentation) invite teams to subdivide the task rather than to work interdependently. Also, large products can tempt students to plagiarize or try to disguise poor quality with quantity. In contrast, assignments that require a specific choice (along with some justification, of course) encourage teammates to work together, wrestling with whatever information they deem relevant in order to make a well-reasoned choice. Specific choices also facilitate the use of higher-order thinking skills (e.g., evaluative decisions like "most," "least," "worst," and "best") and real-world problems for which there may not be a "right" answer. Happily, this approach minimizes grading as well. Instead of grading 100 term papers from each student or even 20 team papers, instructors can grade 20 team choices, supported by one paragraph of justification.

### Simultaneous Responses

Teams should make responses all at once rather than taking turns. Simultaneous reporting can be facilitated with classroom response systems (i.e., "clickers"), color-coded index cards, or a simple show of hands. Simultaneous responding has several advantages. It forces all the teams to have a considered answer prepared at the same moment, eliminating the temptation to simply conform to earlier answers. It also allows the instructor to get feedback from all the teams (even in a large class) without a roll call of 20+ teams. More importantly, simultaneous reporting encourages class discussion when teams arrive at different, but equally valid, conclusions. Discussion can focus on the information and reasoning processes used by different teams, nicely illustrating the complexity of making decisions in settings where there isn't a single "right" answer.

We may have convinced you that good assignments and proper team formation can overcome some of common problems with group work; however, we can hear the worried voice in your head: "I have to lecture because I can't rely on my students to do the reading." In team-based learning, the Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs) mentioned earlier free the instructor from having to "cover the material" in lecture. Because they occur at the beginning of a unit, RATs hold students accountable for reading the text; students can't rely on the course instructor in lieu of reading.

Although traditional reading quizzes would also hold students accountable for reading, RATs offer advantages that traditional reading quizzes do not. To understand why, we need to describe two ways in which RATs differ from traditional reading quizzes. First, students complete a RAT both as an individual and as a team. After each student in a team completes the RAT on their own, students answer the same questions together as a team. The team records their answers on an answer sheet that works like a lottery ticket; students scratch off answers until they find the correct one (i.e., Immediate Feedback Assessment Test; see <http://www.epsteineducation.com/>). Teams earn more points if they find the correct answer in fewer scratches. Students' individual scores and their team scores become part of their final grade.

Second, the individual and team tests are structured so that students can allocate points among different response options. For instance, if I think the correct answer is either B or C but have more confidence in B, I could allocate three points to B and one point to C. If B is the correct answer, I earn three points; if C is the correct answer, I still earn one point.

This procedure may seem cumbersome, but it offers a number of advantages over traditional testing. The team portion of the RAT gives teams the opportunity to work together on a common task, an important building block of team cohesion. By allowing students to provide more than one answer to each item, RATs help students practice their meta-cognitive skills. The team RATs also reward students for communicating

effectively with their teammates and for successfully negotiating any differences of opinion regarding the correct answer.

"But," your worried voice retorts, "my students hate group work." Given typical student experiences of working with others, this concern is not at all unreasonable. However, what students really hate is doing other people's work for them without a mechanism for holding slackers accountable.

Both of these concerns are dealt with in team-based learning: Assignments are designed such that they require interdependence of students' efforts - they should not be achievable by subdividing the task. Thus, the team is never left hanging when a teammate fails to complete his or her portion of the task or doesn't attend class. In addition, permanent teams benefit from cohesiveness built over the term. Unlike ad hoc or temporary groups, students in permanent teams learn how to work with each other successfully. Also, the peer evaluations mentioned earlier builds accountability into the final grade. If team members do not make a good faith effort to contribute to their team's success, their teammates' peer evaluations will reflect that fact.

The bottom line? Team-based learning can revolutionize your teaching and your students' learning. Students clearly enjoy assignments that require them to discuss important and controversial issues rather than listening to "the sage on the stage." Class time is punctuated by vigorous conversations, provocative questions, insightful observations, and plenty of laughter, all initiated by the students themselves. We invite you to give team-based learning a try in your classes.

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## Ideas for Teaching Unfamiliar or Unpopular Courses

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Teaching a course for the first time and teaching courses in which students often find the content uninspiring create both opportunities and challenges. Student evaluations of first-time teaching efforts are seldom flagged as such. They carry the same summative weight as courses one teaches routinely. And although some instructional evaluation instruments ask about student effort and interest, these data are not used to adjust ratings. Faculty members may find these realities sobering. In this chapter, I discuss each teaching context briefly and offer ideas for effectively confronting related challenges.

### Teaching Unfamiliar Courses

New course preparations are part and parcel of new faculty members' lives. These experiences provide new faculty with vital opportunities to develop and hone effective teaching practices. Even after many years of teaching experience, however, circumstances may arise that can draw any of us into - or back into - this potential discomfort zone. Especially problematic situations occur when the course one is asked to teach is not squarely within one's sphere of competence.

The sudden and late-breaking unavailability of a particular faculty member to teach a particular course often forces academic administrators to choose the least problematic path from among several problematic options. As a result, clinical psychologists may be pressed into teaching a "required" physiological psychology course with a lead-time of one week (Ford, 2006). Keith-Spiegel, Whitley, Ware Balogh, Perkins, and Wittig (2002) presented an alternative and equally credible scenario involving a faculty member with no clinical training who wishes to teach a course in behavior disorders. In all such circumstances, ethical ramifications must be addressed - after all, it is unethical for faculty members to teach courses that are not within the scope of their competence (American Counseling Association, 2005; American Psychological Association, 2002).

At the very beginning of any semester, that which is unknown about the upcoming 15 weeks looms large and, to this day, stirs butterflies in my stomach. Standing before students on the first day of class, I often find myself wishing I could advance the clock about 3 weeks hence. When the course is one that I have not taught previously, and especially when it is one that I feel is on the periphery of my sphere of competence, I feel unsettled well into (and sometimes throughout) the semester. Assuming I am not alone in these reactions, it follows that one's visceral reaction to being pressed into teaching beyond one's comfort zone is related to one's degree of familiarity, interest, and relevant experience. Courses for which one lacks relevant experience or interest feel foreign to us, and requests to prepare a new course in such areas may feel more like an invitation to fail.

## Ideas and Recommendations for Teaching an Unfamiliar (or New) Course

In teaching an unfamiliar course, it is crucial to be optimistic and to recognize that it may behoove you to get this course within your bailiwick. In doing so, you may endear yourself to the powers that be not only by teaching it, but also by teaching it very well and without complaint. Approach the course with the idea that you likely will teach it again soon. Whatever circumstances prompted your assignment to teach it this time around may well continue to exist. The ability of the department chair to secure coverage for courses depends on several factors, many that are beyond his or her direct control - for example, the availability of part-time faculty members or the funds to pay them, the degree of specialization required to teach the orphaned course, and the likelihood of filling a vacancy if and when a search is opened.

Early on, you should ascertain the degree of flexibility regarding course content, text selection, and course requirements, and act to modify these elements to better suit your repertoire. Be sure to consider how the course fits within the program: Is it required outright? Does it serve as a preparatory or prerequisite course for other courses? It is also important to gauge students' expectations and assessment of the course. Talk to former students to understand how students view the class, as far as its value in preparing them for additional experiences, such as fieldwork or the Graduate Record Examinations.

In order to know your audience more fully, it is advisable to obtain the previous syllabus as well as syllabi from courses that serve as prerequisites for it and those for which this course serves as a prerequisite. Doing so provides a more complete picture of students' abilities and prior experiences, as well as the degree of uniformity of their backgrounds. In addition, you might seek out other course syllabi from reputable sources such as the web pages of Project Syllabus (go to <http://teachpsych.org/>), developed and maintained by the Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology (OTRP), which offer over 100 peer-reviewed syllabi in psychology.

It may be helpful to schedule a few respite sessions during the semester, by identifying sessions where you have (or can imagine having) a solid, safe, or even "fun" topic and/or activity (e.g., guest speaker, relevant film, student debates, activities you have developed that are applicable to the new course). Distributing these across the semester will give you safe haven from time to time, and will allow you to develop material for the intervening weeks accordingly.

Across many teaching challenges, it is vital to identify and use one's resources well. For teaching unfamiliar courses, this process may begin with a recollection of your first-hand experiences that relate to the course content. Be willing to reframe some experiences in order to make them applicable to the new course. For example, I have taught a number of courses related to assessment in which I have drawn upon my experiences administering tests in school and clinical settings. Were I asked to teach a course in interviewing techniques, I would seek to draw upon the interpersonal aspects of conducting such assessments in order to elicit information, as formal tests represent highly structured interviews. It is also important to talk to colleagues, face to face or electronically, perhaps by using OTRP's Mentoring Service. The Service offers self-directed, confidential mentoring on a large variety of academic topics, as well as 49 specific courses for which mentoring is available.

## Teaching Unloved Courses

A second kind of experience that often puts me out of my comfort zone is teaching courses for which students lack enthusiasm. Some courses are easy to love for the majority of students, but some are not. For students who yearn to be practitioners of any kind, courses with a fair amount of clinical content are generally appealing. Those without it, far less so.

For about the first 10 years of my academic career, I taught courses in Research Methods to Master's degree-seeking students in applied areas of psychology (i.e., counseling, school psychology, and marriage and family therapy [MFT]). Every semester, students wondered aloud why this course was required in their programs of study. They were not required to do a Master's thesis, and almost never saw themselves as becoming involved in research down the line. A few were mollified by my mentioning that, as practitioners, they would be ethically obligated to remain current as far as research findings bearing on their areas of practice. Others recognized that the course content was featured prominently on the departmental comprehensive examination that loomed in their future. On their end-of-semester course evaluations, many students reminded whoever might read their words that they had not looked forward to the course. Some admitted that they had outright dreaded it. Most then proceeded to deliver a backhanded compliment such as, "this course was better than I thought it would be," or "it was a lot of work, but I learned a great deal."

Other courses that seem to fall in the less popular category are those involving statistics. In her 1995 Presidential Address to the Northeastern Educational Research Association, Schmelkin stated, "...[I]f you want to get a flavor of how most people feel about statistics, I suggest that the next time you are asked at a social gathering what you teach, tell people you teach statistics..." (p. 4). Schmelkin routinely seizes these opportunities to begin to demonstrate the relevance of her subject matter, and its reliance on logic and critical thinking, which are far more appealing than numbers to many students.

### Ideas and Recommendations for Teaching an Unloved (or Unpopular) Course

When teaching unloved content, it is essential to address student concerns immediately and to respond to the entire group whenever it seems even remotely appropriate to do so. It may appear that only one or two students are seriously misinformed or somewhat antagonistic regarding course content or requirements, because perhaps only one or two students bring an issue squarely before you. However, I have found that students often put their "best representatives" forward to carry the concerns of the large group to their instructors. This practice seems to be especially true in unloved courses. When discussing the concern with the entire class, try to avoid identifying individual students by simply noting that "whatever" has come to your attention as an issue that needs clarification or additional attention. This approach opens (or keeps open) direct lines of communication with all students.

In teaching such courses, be sympathetic about student concerns. It probably has been a while since you experienced your "least favorite" course, but we all had one or more. My least favorite undergraduate course was a psychology course. I deem it my least favorite because of the faculty member's actions, not the course content, per se. Try to remember the feelings you had during your least favorite course (e.g., frustration, annoyance, confusion, uncertainty, fear) when listening to your students today.

Most programs in psychology require students to take one or more courses in behavioral statistics, rather than general or mathematical statistics. Why? Because the content is organized and presented in a manner that emphasizes behavioral science applications of statistical principles. In other words, the content is made relevant to psychology. The same idea should permeate our teaching of unpopular course content: Make the content relevant to students' goals and values. In teaching Research Methods to students in a MFT program, for example, I used examples involving family adaptability and cohesion, which was a prominent area of interest for students in the program.

Perhaps the most important element in teaching unloved courses has to do with our expectations of students. We should expect students to succeed and let them know that we expect them to succeed. It is unreasonable to equate success with some kind of "conversion" to your way of viewing the subject matter. Rather, one should respect students' preferences and help them to appreciate the value of the subject matter at hand with reference to their aspirations.

### Summary

One overall theme that undergirds the recommendations for teaching unfamiliar or unloved courses is to know and exploit one's resources. The term "resources" should be interpreted broadly, to include one's personal strengths, attributes, experiences, and creativity, as well as those of others upon whom one may draw directly or indirectly. A second theme relates to early and ongoing collection of relevant information, from multiples sources (e.g., colleagues, students, mentors, institutional records and files, and so forth). I hope these general strategies and the specific techniques spelled out herein will improve instruction of new or unpopular courses in psychology.

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## How Cognitive Psychology Can Enhance Your Students' Learning

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**T**his year, more than 600,000 full-time college faculty members in the United States will teach more than 17 million students ("The Nation," 2007). Given the enormity of this enterprise, wouldn't you expect to find hundreds of articles and books about how to apply cognitive psychology, to help our students learn more effectively? In 2002, I wrote a chapter entitled "Cognitive Psychology and College-Level Pedagogy: Two Siblings Who Rarely Communicate" (Matlin, 2002). Four years later, these two siblings still do not have frequent conversations.

Here's one index of this communication problem. Applied Cognitive Psychology is a respected journal that should focus on how college professors can enhance their students' learning. Between January 1996 and July 2007, I located 39 articles published on improving students' classroom learning. That's about three or four articles each year. During that same period, how many articles do you think this journal published on another application of cognitive psychology, specifically, eyewitness testimony? Make an educated guess, and then check the answer at the end of this chapter. Clearly, you can make an important contribution to psychology by conducting applied cognitive-psychology research about classroom learning!

In this chapter, I will discuss seven basic suggestions about improving students' learning. In general, I'll emphasize memory improvement, but some suggestions focus on problem solving.

### *1. Divided-attention situations typically reduce acquisition and retention*

Several decades of cognitive psychology research demonstrate that people cannot effectively pay attention to two simultaneous messages (Ward, 2004). However, are you unintentionally creating a divided-attention dilemma for your students? For instance, do you distribute a handout to students, and then lecture while they read the handout?

In my course in Psychology of Women, I used to begin the topic of women and work by distributing a handout, while describing our topics for that day. This handout was a short essay written by a former student of mine who had emigrated from China. When she arrived in New York City as a teenager, she actually worked in an illegal sweatshop. No surprise, but my students chose to read her essay, rather than to hear my overview of the day's topics. I now avoid a divided-attention situation by handing this essay to them at the end of class.

The divided-attention situation also arises when professors use PowerPoint in a class while simultaneously presenting other information in a lecture. Students often complain that they cannot take notes on the PowerPoint slide they are seeing while simultaneously recording the words they are hearing from their professor. Yes, some professors use

PowerPoint effectively. However, to paraphrase Charles Brewer, PowerPoint sometimes has a great deal of power, but not much point.

*2. Students usually learn more effectively with distributed learning rather than massed learning*

Think about the concepts that you really want your students to recall, say, 10 years from now. Then figure out how to emphasize these concepts several times throughout your course rather than only once. We all know that distributed learning is more effective than massed learning (Koriat & Helstrup, 2007). However, we need to remind ourselves to apply it in our own classrooms. Furthermore, students' mastery of a concept improves if they answer a question about it on an exam, even if they actually receive no feedback (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006).

*3. Repeated presentations in a variety of settings typically encourage transfer of training*

This principle applies not just to memory, but also to problem solving. For this principle, we need to focus on the overarching concepts that we want our students to master by the time they graduate from college. For example, I want my students to understand several basic research-methods issues, such as confounding variables and the nature of statistical interactions. Students may complete several courses in research methods, but they frequently compartmentalize their knowledge. When they are sitting in their cognitive psychology class, they often fail to apply the concepts they learned last semester.

To encourage students to apply these important concepts in a new setting, I give them a brief, ungraded quiz on each topic. According to these quizzes, for instance, many students believe that the term "confounding variable" means "anything that is wrong with your study."

Suppose that we do manage to encourage our students to think about research methods issues in several different courses, such as social psychology, personality psychology, developmental psychology, and cognitive psychology. Then they should be able to apply this kind of critical thinking when they read the newspaper or when they try to solve a problem in their professional life. In summary, we need to provide opportunities to practice, so that our students can transfer their knowledge and their problem solving skills to new settings.

*4. Students often learn more effectively if they must generate information*

For example, suppose that my students are looking at a complex graph showing the results of a study. I want them to look at a graph and be able to describe the various conclusions. So I pass out a copy of a graph to each student, perhaps of a 2 x 3 design. I instruct them, "Write down every conclusion that you can draw, based on the information shown in this graph." When I ask for their observations, the class may generate four or five different statements. They seem to be impressed that everyone is looking at the same graph, and yet they emphasize several different comparisons.

It's also helpful to think about the end point that we want our students to reach. I want my students, after they graduate, to look at a graph in a newspaper and be able to verbally describe the comparisons: "O.K., it looks like this main effect is significant, but I think this interaction would also be significant." (Notice that this skill is not simply memory, but problem solving.)

### *5. Deep levels of processing generally enhance learning*

The research shows that people remember more effectively if they are encouraged to apply course material to themselves, their friends, and real-life settings (Roediger, Gallo, & Geraci, 2002). Now, I'm not sure how professors of organic chemistry could apply this principle to their teaching. However, in psychology, it's easy to ask students to think of examples from their own experiences. For instance, I begin my class in cognitive psychology by providing a standard definition of "cognitive psychology." Then I ask them to write down examples of cognitive task that they performed since they woke up that morning. As students volunteer ideas, I ask them to listen to the variety of everyday tasks and picture themselves performing each one. An additional benefit is their recognition that cognitive psychology does not need to be an esoteric course.

### *6. Students are typically overconfident about their mastery of a topic*

Stephen Chew (2008) discussed the problem of overconfidence in his chapter which appears earlier in this volume. The research on college students' metacomprehension shows that they usually read some pages of text, and they think they understand the material perfectly. In reality, however, their accuracy is relatively low (Maki et al., 2005). Furthermore, students tend to overestimate their overall score on an examination (Koriat & Bjork, 2006). They may have a general feeling of familiarity for a given topic; however, they do not remember the precise details. I emphasize this issue several times in each class I teach, beginning on the first day of class.

This overconfidence is not a major issue for my class in cognitive psychology; students know that the course is challenging. However, each semester, I also teach psychology of women and child development. In psychology of women, for example, some students read an entire chapter on gender comparisons in academic ability, and they fail to appreciate the subtleties of the research. They may conclude, for instance, "Men are better at math." However, I want them to learn a more sophisticated concept, "On a few math tests with some groups, the average score for men is higher than the average score for women, but there is a huge overlap in the two frequency distributions. Also, for most math tests, the gender differences are minimal." (I call this oversimplification problem the "Larry Summers Effect," in honor of the former president of Harvard University.)

### *7. Students usually underestimate how long it will take them to complete a project*

This final principle is related to students' overconfidence in memory, but it focuses more on problem solving and decision-making. According to the planning fallacy (Buehler, Griffin, & Ross, 2002), people typically underestimate the amount of time required to complete a project, and they estimate that the mission will be easy to accomplish.

We can reduce the impact of the planning fallacy by helping our students visualize each step they must complete, as well as possible roadblocks. For instance, I require a literature review paper for my course in cognitive psychology. For many years, students invariably told me that it took much longer than anticipated to complete their paper.

A few years ago, I began asking my class to write some advice about this paper that would be helpful to next semester's students in cognitive psychology. Then I record the most vivid pointers, and I hand out this advice early in the next semester. If I tell students to start their papers early, they will yawn. However, they treat the warnings

more seriously if they read the lurid details about the potential roadblocks faced by students like themselves. The students also provide cogent advice about numerous other aspects of writing literature reviews, but here is one student's quotation that addresses the planning fallacy: "Start your paper early, whether it's something as small as getting your research articles or doing an outline. If you have a week that is not busy, do some work on it instead of simply relaxing. Even if it's just a little bit of work, it all helps in the end when you are rushing around trying to complete it, and you will be that much farther ahead."

I'd like to end by urging you to consider the issue of how we can apply the research on cognitive psychology in our own classrooms. I'll also encourage you to conduct formal research on this important real-life topic. I'm hopeful that we can discover many ways to encourage these two siblings, cognitive psychology and college-level pedagogy, to develop stronger bonds with each other and engage in many productive collaborations.

### Notes

Between January 1996 and July 2007, *Applied Cognitive Psychology* published 256 articles on eyewitness testimony, compared to 39 articles on improving students' classroom learning.

This chapter is based on a presentation titled "How cognitive psychology can enhance your students' learning." The presentation was part of an APA symposium in 2006, "Pragmatic Pedagogy: Using cognitive science to optimize learning." Regan Gurung organized the symposium.

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## Setting Up a Blog or Podcast for the Teaching of Psychology: A "How To" and "Why To"

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**Y**ou have probably heard a great deal about how technologies such as blogs and podcasts can be used in the classroom. In this chapter, I'll give you concrete explanations of how to set up a blog and how to post audio on it, and I will mention a few reasons for doing this.

### Why Use a Blog?

Blogs are simple web pages with time-stamped entries or "posts." Typically, a blog is written by one person and readers post comments in reaction to what that person (the administrator) had to say. Only the person who created the blog can create a post; all others can only comment on a post.

If you have access to a content management system like Blackboard, then in many ways you already have a system that is capable of doing some of the things for which you might use a blog: communicating with students and creating online discussions. If you don't have access to such a system, then a blog is a good way to quickly get a web presence for yourself and your class where you can discuss topics. What other purposes are there for a blog?

#### *A "tough topics" blog*

As you know, students tend to ask the same questions every semester. Why not record (either in text or audio) your answers to these questions and post them on a blog? Use student blog comments to refine your explanation over time and to better understand why students are confused on a topic. Before students come to your office hours for help, ask them to go to the blog first to see if the answer lies there.

#### *A "psychology internship" blog*

Since blogs encourage bloggers to record their thoughts and reflect on their experiences, a blog can be used to help students keep a journal of their experiences during their internship. At the end of the semester, students will have a dated record of their thoughts throughout the experience and can use this record to put together a final paper on what they learned and how they grew during the internship.

#### *Guest speakers*

Here is a wonderful idea from the book *Classroom Blogging* (Warlick, 2005): Record your guest speakers. This is an especially valuable idea because they are always hard to

get. When you have someone to come to speak to your class, record him/her and get it on a blog so students this semester and in the future can benefit from it.

### *An easy to use, powerful class website*

Because blogs have become so popular, many people have written free "plug-ins" that make blogs far more versatile and more like powerful websites. On my blog (<http://www.thepsychfiles.com/>), for instance, I have plug-ins that allow visitors to (a) email me, (b) receive an email notification whenever I post something to the site, (c) leave a voicemail message that I can either place on the site or keep private, and (d) allow visitors to respond to a poll. I didn't have to know any programming at all to add these "widgets" to my site. You can use these tools to post homework, make announcements, or communicate with students.

### *Peer review*

Another good suggestion from Classroom Blogging is to use a blog as a place for students to provide their peers with feedback on their writing. First, ask students to sign up for an email notification from other students' blogs. Then, when students post a draft of their work, other students will be notified and then can go to the blog to leave comments and learn from their peers' work.

## How to Set Up a Blog

Setting up a blog is fairly simple. It is free and it requires no knowledge of HTML. I recommend either Wordpress ([www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)) or Blogger ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)). I'll outline the steps for setting up a blog using Blogger.

### *Step 1: Set up an account with the blog host using your name and email address*

Go to <http://www.blogger.com/>, click the "Sign Up Now" button, and follow the steps to set up a username and password. Once you receive the confirmation email, go back to Blogger and log in.

### *Step 2: Follow the three prompts to create a unique name URL for the blog*

For example, assuming your name is Smith and you are setting up a blog for your fall '07 psych101 class, you name your Blog "Dr. Smith's Blog" and you might try a URL of smithpsych101f07. If Blogger indicates that this name is available, your blog's URL is now <http://smithpsych101f07.blogspot.com>. Note that "www" is not part of this url. That URL isn't pretty, but it's free. Email it to your students so they can bookmark it. Later on, if you have web space from your college, you can work with your help desk and they can move your blogger site over to your college web space so you can use, for example, [www.mycollege.edu/drsmith](http://www.mycollege.edu/drsmith).

### *Step 3: You're now ready to go*

You'll be sent to a generic, customizable blog homepage. The Blogger interface is fairly intuitive and is all menu driven. You'll use the "New Post" button most frequently. Blogger will provide you with a Microsoft Word-like WYSIWYG editor, so the images you see on the screen as you write are the same as users will see. You might begin by writing

a post on the topic you discussed in class and then ask students to comment on your post to keep the discussion going.

Have your students follow the same procedure outlined above to start their own blogs. The student is the administrator of their blog and you can only comment on the students' posts. Students should email you the URL of their blog.

### Creating an "Audio Blog"

Suppose that in addition to, or instead of writing posts, you would rather record audio files of yourself talking. You can put these files into your blog, but it will require a few steps. I can provide some general guidelines, but exactly how you do this at your college or university will differ depending on your system.

#### *Creating an audio file*

Recording audio on a computer is becoming fairly commonplace, so if you are comfortable doing this you may wish to skip to the section on how to upload your recorded files.

You probably don't want to use your computer's built-in microphone to record your voice. These microphones are okay in a pinch, but the audio quality is usually poor. Instead, you'll want to use your computer's USB port to connect an external microphone. Many good quality microphones can be purchased which have a USB input at one end. Search for "usb microphone" on Amazon.com and you'll find many options.

You will need software to record your audio. Many people use the free audio editor called Audacity (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>). It's easy to set up. Connect your microphone to your computer first, then open Audacity and go into its "Preferences." Under the "Device" drop-down menu in the "Recording" tab, select your external microphone. Recording is as simple as clicking the red record button. You can save it as a .wav file if the audio file is short. Longer files should be saved as .mp3 files which will compress them into a smaller size.

#### *Uploading your file to a web server*

A "web server" is simply a computer connected to the Internet that can distribute your audio files to listeners. Your personal computer is not set up to do this. Your college, however, has probably given you some server space so you can host a web page if you wish. You can also use this space to host and serve your audio files. Here's how to do this.

First, upload your audio file to your folder on your college web server. You'll probably need to use an ftp program to do this. If you've never used such a program, then it's best if you contact your college help desk for assistance. The general idea is this: if your space on your college web server is called [www.mycollege.edu/myname](http://www.mycollege.edu/myname) and you recorded and saved your first lecture as `psy101_lecture1_090607.mp3`, then after uploading the file the link to this file would be: [www.mycollege.edu/myname/psy101\\_lecture1\\_090607.mp3](http://www.mycollege.edu/myname/psy101_lecture1_090607.mp3).

Instead of giving out that URL in class, you may want to create a link to this file from a post in your blog because it is too long for anyone to remember. In Blogger, create a post (or edit an existing one) and highlight a sentence like "Click here to listen to this lecture." Then click the "link" button on the toolbar and type in (or copy) the long URL above.

Your students will hear your audio file when they read your post and click the link. Keep following this method for all your future files. You may need to ask your college for more server space if you record a lot of audio. Video can be hosted in this same way. For a video walkthrough of this process, go to <http://www.thepsychfiles.com/2007/08/09/episode-24-almost-complete/>

### Let the Internet Come to You

Suppose you have many students on an internship and you've asked them to set up a blog to reflect on their experiences. Do you have to visit each student's blog every day to see if he or she has written a new post? Thankfully, no. There is an easier way to find out if there is anything new on a blog using RSS. RSS files are small, typically generated automatically by your blog, and allow people to "subscribe" to your site. You'll be notified when something new is posted.

Suppose you have 30 students posting to 30 different blogs. Subscribe to each student's blog and whenever a student posts something new, you'll be notified. All you need to do is copy each blog's RSS (or Atom) file and use the free Google Reader program (<http://www.google.com/reader/>). Click the "Add Subscription" button and copy the name of the RSS file into the box. From then on, just check Google reader, and you'll see whether one of your students has created a new post. The process for setting up your reader does involve a few steps, but there is help available. There is a getting started video and a "Take A Tour" walkthrough once you arrive on Google reader, but you may also want to try this "5 Minute Walkthrough" of Google reader available on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ltttw5yORv8>, or this longer walkthrough at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65iL0Q97RCg>.

### Conclusion

Blogs and podcasts can be pedagogically sound tools to add to your repertoire as an instructor so long as you are clear about the role they will play in your class and how they will contribute to student learning. Blogs are especially useful for helping students to reflect on their learning and to continue conversation beyond the classroom. They may also serve as a handy place to put your responses to frequently asked questions on tough topics. Audio recordings are useful for creating an archive of great talks given by invited speakers. As you become more comfortable using the technology, you'll find more uses for these tools in the classroom.

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### Recommended Blogs

PsyBlog: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/PsychologyBlog/>

Psych Central: <http://psychcentral.com/blog/>

Psychology Today: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/index.rss>

PsycPort: <http://www.psycport.com/siteware/rssfeed.xml>

The Psych Files: [http://www.thepsychfiles.com/tpf\\_feed.xml](http://www.thepsychfiles.com/tpf_feed.xml)

## Creating an Undergraduate Psychology Peer Mentoring Program: Challenges and Rewards

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One important role of undergraduate-level psychology professors is to advise students, however, it is a role that many faculty struggle to complete. Due to their many teaching responsibilities, service commitments, and scholarly work, student advising is not always as thorough and meaningful as many professors and students would prefer. Indeed, according to Bigger (2005), academic advising can have a profound impact on student learning. Upcraft (1995) further noted that students need to feel important and supported to have a connection to their campus and to cope with the transition to college. Good advising and mentoring creates these crucial bonds. As undergraduate populations increase, faculty members cannot always fully meet the advising and mentoring needs of their advisees; hence, effective additions to the advising process for students by students can provide a great benefit.

In the fall of 2005, several faculty members and students in the psychology department at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP) created a student peer mentoring program to supplement and enhance the advising and mentoring that psychology majors were already receiving from faculty. Overall, the goals of the UWSP Psychology Peer Mentoring Program are to provide psychology students with vital information regarding: success in the major, course scheduling, study skills and time-management, psychology-related opportunities available on and off campus, campus and community resources, and careers in psychology. Most importantly, this program provides students with a direct and regular connection to another student who has demonstrated success in the program and who is eager to share his or her experiences. In this article, I discuss how to implement a successful undergraduate psychology peer mentoring program, including both the challenges and rewards of putting it together.

### Suggestions for Program Leadership and Timeline of Duties

In order to maximize the success of a peer mentoring program, leadership duties should be split among two faculty advisors and four student officers. Recommended student officer positions include the Program Coordinator, the Communications Chair, the Recruitment Chair, and the Organizational Chair. The roles of the faculty advisors include designing and overseeing the program goals and structure, managing the student officers, training the mentors, and keeping lines of communicating open with the rest of the faculty. In terms of student leadership participation, the Program Coordinator manages the roles and duties of the other officers and maintains regular contact with faculty advisors. The Program Coordinator serves as the main contact person for the program and is responsible for matching mentors with mentees, maintaining online resources and mentor resource documents, keeping track of all records of the organization, and examining program evaluation data. The Communications Chair

works with the Organizational Chair to advertise meetings, create and post all advertising for the program, and prepare, collect, and analyze program evaluation data. The Recruitment Chair arranges brief classroom presentations and prepares informational handouts regarding the peer mentoring program in order to recruit mentees from among students in freshman and sophomore level classes. The Recruitment Chair also assists the Program Coordinator in preparing and reviewing mentor and mentee applications. Finally, the Organizational Chair serves as the treasurer for the organization, coordinates meetings (including making room reservations and preparing refreshments), and works in coordination with the Communication Chair to advertise upcoming meetings.

### Program Membership

Students who would like to serve as mentors should be junior or senior psychology majors who have completed at least 15 credits in psychology and who have demonstrated academic success. Mentors must be willing to complete a training session at the start of each semester and to maintain regular contact with their assigned mentees. Mentees should consist of any student who is interested in psychology and in having a mentor. Mentees typically are psychology majors or minors; however, any interested student should be welcome to participate in the mentee role.

### Training Protocol

All mentors should participate in a training session, during which the faculty advisors and student coordinator discuss the goals of the program, teach basic mentoring skills and motivational interviewing techniques, and review appropriate and inappropriate mentor and mentee behaviors, topics, and interactions. For example, mentees are not allowed to talk disparagingly about courses or professors, as this is not professional behavior. Likewise, mentees are not personal counselors and therefore must be informed about how to contact the faculty advisors immediately if their mentees raise issues related to family or relational conflicts, abuse, psychological disorders, or suicide, for example.

It is useful to invite mentees to the last half-hour of the training meeting in order to be matched up with their mentors. The Program Coordinator determines mentor-mentee pairings based on similarities in interests as reported on sign-up forms completed by interested students prior to the training sessions.

### Program Materials

All mentors should receive a variety of handouts and resource sheets during their training sessions, which can also be made available on-line via a classroom management system such as Blackboard or Desire 2 Learn. The most useful of these sheets that we provide at UWSP include the “peer mentoring program contract” that mentees and mentors discuss and complete at the start of the semester match-up meetings (contact the author for a sample contract), as well as an “unwritten rules of the psychology department” sheet which contains information put together by mentors listing topics they wished they had known about early in the program but had not discovered until later. Finally, we include information about campus resources, volunteering opportunities, research with faculty, and internships in the mentor training manuals.

## Challenges We Still Face

Despite the largely favorable outcomes of the UWSP peer mentoring program, there are several challenges we still face. The first is how to increase participation in the program. To date, we have averaged about 25 mentors and 23 mentees per semester. Although the students who participate seem to be satisfied with the program, we believe our numbers could be much higher, given that we have approximately 400 majors and 200 minors in our department. We are particularly interested in finding a way to involve those students who are struggling and most need extra assistance.

Another challenge we face is how to ensure repeated contacts between mentor-mentee dyads. Students have resisted set meeting times, noting that they prefer to get together on their own or to conduct their mentoring sessions via telephone or e-mail. Most students report having contact with their mentors/mentees an average of four times per semester, however, several mentees have expressed dissatisfaction with mentors who were not available to them consistently throughout the term.

## Program Outcomes

Evaluations of the UWSP peer mentoring program over the past two years have shown that both mentors and mentees are satisfied with the program. Mentors reported that benefits of participating in the program include the development of leadership skills, a sense of generativity and fulfillment, and a greater connection to their peers and to members of the faculty. Mentees have reported the following benefits: greater sense of belonging in the department, better understanding of what can be done with an undergraduate psychology degree, feeling more informed and prepared for the process of applying to graduate school, feeling less intimidated to talk with professors, and feeling more confident going into advising sessions. Faculty members have anecdotally reported favorable outcomes of the program as well.

## Suggestions

In closing, I offer several key recommendations to those who may be planning to implement a peer mentoring program on their own campus. I highly recommend having two faculty advisors to oversee the program, especially in its early, most time-consuming phases. In addition, having a clinical psychologist serve as either an advisor or consultant is useful when training mentors about their roles and for serving as a resource person if mentors identify that their mentees need counseling in addition to mentoring. Having multiple student leaders to take on the various duties required to make the program run smoothly is also recommended. An ideal number of officers for such a program is three or four.

The use of an on-line classroom management system (i.e., Blackboard, Desire 2 Learn) where students can access program resource materials, post questions, and engage in on-line discussions and forums 24 hours a day is a useful supplement to in-person meetings and training sessions. In addition, advertising and communication about the program are essential to the success of the program. Based on student feedback, the UWSP peer mentoring program will be supplementing traditional means of advertising the program (i.e., e-mail, flyers) with the use of Facebook, a social networking website that is very popular among college students. Many students have reported that they are more likely to notice and respond to an event advertised on Facebook than a flyer hung up among a mass of other posters in the hallway. Finally,

sending student officers to freshman and sophomore classes early in the semester to briefly present information about the program during class time is recommended.

To avoid making the mentoring program feel like another class, meetings can be held in locations other than standard classrooms. Student lounges within the department or university center, or even private meeting rooms at off-campus restaurants or other establishments seem to increase student interest and enjoyment in the program. In addition to the initial group match-up meeting, holding an end-of-the-semester group social also is a highlight of the experience for participants. Inviting faculty members to participate in these meetings to demonstrate the support of the entire department and to show mentees that they do not have to feel intimidated by their professors is also recommended.

Finally, obtaining official recognition of the peer mentoring program as a student group by your campus student government is encouraged. Such recognition helps legitimize the program and more importantly, provides a budget with which to purchase supplies and expenses associated with running the program.

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## Rescuing the Affective: Teaching the Mind and the Heart

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**M**y interest in the affective dimensions of teaching began many years ago when I was investigating epiphanies in student learning. As I read student journals and listened to students describe their insights, I was struck by the fact that virtually all of these descriptions, whether they were written or verbal, were grounded in affective dimensions such as emotions, values and beliefs, spirituality, and self-understanding. This triggered for me a curiosity and a respect for the affective and the understanding that we simply cannot teach for enduring learning without honoring (and I would argue privileging) the affective in our classrooms. Sadly, as teachers in higher education, we have been well socialized to split the heart and the mind and thereby dichotomize the affective and the cognitive. We have learned quite well and are sometimes fearful that a discussion of emotions in college teaching will translate to a pedagogy that lacks rigor.

Interestingly, such a perspective has not always existed. The early philosophers talked about the partnership between the affective and the cognitive, and our own William James (1884), spoke eloquently about the intimate connection between emotional and cognitive understanding, and he suggested that they are never separate from one another nor distinctive nor pure. Our early pioneers of education (many of whom were psychologists) such as Maria Montessori, Anna Freud, and Melanie Klein, consistently talked about the significance of the affective and centered their respective theories of education on affective dimensions.

Some of the most impressive research on the importance of the affective in learning appears in the early childhood education literature. For example, many studies on exceptional classrooms and exceptional teachers of young children indicate that the cognitive scaffolding of concepts and teaching strategies are held together by emotionality (Jeffrey & Woods, 1996). However, while emotions are often highlighted and privileged in early childhood education research, they are treated in the secondary school research as troubling disturbances flooding into the classroom as a result of problems with families or peers (Hargreaves, 1998). A focus on emotions has been virtually absent from most contemporary analyses of the college classroom. As Hargreaves (1998) suggests, individuals in higher education are treated as “emotionally anorexic” with feelings seen as “variables for managerial control” (p. 560).

The good news, however, is that there is a newly emerging rhetoric in terms of the significance of the affect in intellectual inquiry. Some of this comes out of a spirituality movement that is sweeping across the country, as reflected in the writings of individuals like Parker Palmer (1998) and Sandi and Helen Astin (2004). Some of the impetus comes from neuroanatomy, physics, neuropsychology, and developmental psychology as observed in the works of scientists such as Daniel Goleman (1995), Jon Kabat-Zinn (1990), Art Zajonc (2006), and Robert Kegan (1982). Still much comes from the various

centers for integrative studies and funding organizations like the Fetzer Institute. In fact, when one carefully examines the current trends virtually all of the major movements in higher education today have as their common denominator an emphasis on the affective in learning (i.e., service learning, experiential learning, ethics and values, leadership, and citizenship). Many scholars argue that dusk may be falling on old epistemologies and that we now are on the verge of an epistemological revolution. Rather than restricting our understanding of learning to old paradigms, we are now talking about the integration of heart and mind, we are emphasizing the process of growth rather than the end product, and we are focusing on an ethical engagement with the profound issues of the disciplines. We are asking such questions as, “What are the capacities we want our students to have and what are the capacities that they need so that they might contribute to a more sane and compassionate world?” “What do we want to integrate in our institutions?” “How might we teach dialogically?” “How might wisdom be incorporated as a pedagogical goal?” “How might we assist our students and ourselves in moving through life consciously rather than unconsciously?” “How do we recover from the neglect of our interiority?” This epistemological revolution, if we agree that such is occurring, is not the abandonment of scholarship in our institutions of higher learning but rather a grounding of this scholarship in a contemplative education and inquiry that provide a safe space for growth. So, how do we honor affective development in our teaching and what are the practices that nurture this development? At the same time, how do we avoid over-romanticizing the emotional and reducing the material of our courses and our disciplines to secondary stature?

Certainly more research needs to be done on affective practices and their effects over time. However, in my own teaching I began with a series of questions that seemed integral to rescuing the affective in my own classroom: How do we help learners (both our students and ourselves) make the connection between the heart and the mind? How do we teach provocatively and evocatively? How do we raise consciousness? What epistemological frameworks privilege the subjective? As I began to address these questions, I was able to clarify affective goals and accompanying practices that seem to be working effectively in my classroom.

### Cognitive-Affective Practices

A classroom ethos that fuels “disorienting moments” is a mandate for me. Such disorienting moments in my own classroom have come primarily through service-learning and the reflection that is part of this type of pedagogy. A well developed service-learning course forces the student to interrogate and excavate the theory of the classroom against the backdrop of lives lived in the real world. Students are required to critique their assumptions around difference (whether these are assumptions about race/ethnicity, or class, or gender, or sexuality).

Of course, service-learning is only one of many pedagogical venues that offer this type of possibility. Assignments and course materials that problematize and create “emotional disturbances” are also significant to these disorienting moments. I require assignments that I hope will trigger some movement toward interiority and the navigation of paradox. For example, I typically assign two exercises in my Psychology of Women class that students report as epiphanic. The Curriculum Evaluation Exercise is certainly not my property but rather one that is used by many individuals who teach Women’s Studies classes to make visible the ways in which privilege and power are invisible in the mainstream curriculum. I ask students to evaluate the curricula in at least two of their current courses by addressing such questions as, “who is the author of the text,” “what perspective does the text assume,” “what do the text and course

emphasize in terms of whose voice is underscored and whose voice is marginalized,” etc. Students begin to see that their own curriculum, which they assumed to be “objective,” often reflects the profound influence of a particular political and social system. This one exercise operationalizes the impact of the patriarchal, white, western, male perspective in ways that my students can actually feel and in ways that resonate. The second assignment, the Oral History Interview, typically triggers powerful discussions of mothering. While students are given the opportunity to interview any woman who is at least 20 years her senior, most of my students interview their mothers. This single exercise brings to life an understanding of their mothers as girls and women with lives separate from theirs and yet intimately linked, a recognition that often has not occurred until this moment. It also allows for a realization and naming of the tensions that exist in the mother-daughter relationship. While many college women are adamant in their position that they will not be like their mothers nor will they sacrifice themselves for their children, they require that their mothers be self-sacrificing and always present for them. This particular assignment underscores the paradox inherent in a young woman’s concept of self as a future mother and her expectations of her mother. Of course, when one requires such assignments as a teacher, she/he must be prepared. We have to be willing to provide a safety net in which students may “mess up.” We must also be willing to create a “contemplative space” whereby each of us can “inhabit paradox” (O’Reilly, 2005) and “live the questions” (Rilke, 1984).

Collaboration and reflection among students are significant in my classes as they serve as critical opportunities for seeing another perspective. As ethnic, racial, class, and sexual diversity increase in many of our classrooms, projects grounded in collaboration force students to engage “the other” in deep and substantive ways. Reflection papers are my way of giving students permission to “dig deep” into their selves and work out a personal meaning to course material. I want to convey to them that their meanings, interpretations, and experiences matter and have legitimacy. While I will ask for their synthesis and analysis of a reading, I will also allow them the space in this paper to honor the little stories of their lives against the big story of their respective psychology course (Palmer, 1998). Writing collaboratively is particularly important to me for the community engagement it fosters. Even the most reticent student in class is more likely to share thoughts, reflections, and speech in a writing situation with another student. Like other assignments, this one encourages a closer look at how one’s own meaning making processes intersect with others.

I require risk taking. I expect my students to speak and to take risks with their opinions whether in classroom conversation, in their journals or response papers, or in our on-line class conference. I insist that they assume a perspective and an opinion and that they then justify it. The more they speak and write with consciousness, the more authentic their voice becomes and the greater the likelihood that they will begin to trust their own truth. I am also mindful that I am asking my students to engage in emotional risk taking in a system that has diminished emotions and often punishes risk taking in students because it is “unscholarly” or “without rigor.” Speech does not come easily to many of our students but is more likely to be generated when the personal and the emotional are valued. However, I am also discovering that speech is less likely to occur when the personal is required. I want to respect my students’ decision not to speak by providing other venues for their voices. Some of the most eloquent connections between the cognitive and affective component of a course have come in one-to-one meetings with me, through our computer class conference, or in journal writing.

Finally, I have found that some form of intentional stillness in the classroom is a necessity. I use meditative music at the beginning of each and every class as a venue for “dropping into awareness” and to interiority. Stillness, as a prologue to the class process,

introduces a tone of respect for learning and the possibility of the student moving within to listen to the self. Too, as many have suggested, the pauses in the classroom allow space to think, to consider, and to trust oneself in the learning process.

There is great solace in teaching to the heart, but there is also struggle and issues with which to be reckoned. As a feminist teacher, I am accustomed to alternative and subversive ways of thinking about and practicing pedagogy. I want my students to claim their place at the table through their intellectual and emotional voices. However, at times, students “get stuck” in their own emotional stories and cannot make the connection between that emotional and personal experience and the bigger story of the discipline or the relevant class material. At this point the teacher must skillfully and carefully honor their story while helping them link it to the cognitive, and this is not always an easy task. We as teachers must be willing to sit in the emotion with our students but also know when to move on. Similarly, what we as teachers think we mean by voice, heart, emotions, etc. and what our students mean are sometimes at odds. While many of us attempt to create a milieu where students might discover their own voices and find intellectual power in their emotions, we are not always prepared for their voices and emotions, especially those that do not meet our unstated expectations. We may be more likely to affirm the importance of emotions when they are gentle, stimulate pro-sociality, and make the classroom comfortable and inviting. We may not be so ready or prepared to navigate the terrain of the more volatile emotions, those that are less easily managed. Therefore, it seems important to understand the sociological and political underpinnings of emotions in the classroom and how emotions are expressed given these underpinnings. As our campuses become more diverse, these understandings on the part of the teacher take on greater import. What seems significant is that emotional engagement must occur in the context of critical analyses rather than in a context of pure sentimentality.

Finally, if we as teachers are privileging the affective in our classrooms, we must know our own hearts and be willing to navigate our own inner landscape. Given the sense of institutional alienation many of us report from our work as academicians, the task of rescuing the affective in our students is even more difficult if we have not rescued our own hearts. In so many ways teaching to the heart and the mind is a courageous act. It requires that we move beyond those ways of knowing and teaching with which we have developed a comfort. In return, this transition affords the possibility for us to join with our students in new and radical ways and then, as O’Reilly (2005) states, “watch how everything changes” (xiv).

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