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EDLE 709

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Fayetteville State University
Impact of Integrated course Design
Report Completed After Course Completion

Name: Miriam Chitiga
Semester (revised course was taught): Spring 2011

Course Title and Description:
University and College Teaching (aka Teaching and Learning in Higher Education EDLE 709

3. COURSE DESCRIPTION (Catalog)

[The course is] an examination of philosophies, methodologies, and related issues (gender, race, etc.) that influence teaching and learning in college and university classroom settings. Emphasis [is] on teaching effectiveness, the application of course material to the formal classroom environment, assessment, and standards.

1. **Explain the impact your "In-Depth Analysis of Situational Factors" had on your approach to the course.**

It helped me tailor the activities to the students' needs – not just to the course needs! Given that my students are full time professionals taking three classes per week, I designed the course deliverables in such a way that they would easily find immediate personal use, relevance, and application during and after completion. For example, one major individual assignment is a "Teaching Philosophy." Two students have already reported that they have used their class assignment draft for real life job applications they have made this semester! They said they had never before heard of such a thing as a personal teaching philosophy! Another key way that the analysis of situational factors helped my course was in the creation of semester long teams. A keen analysis of the individual students in the cohort, as well as the cohort social dynamics helped me place students into the most appropriate, functional teams that are working well as they execute their learning activities and complete team assignments.

2. **Explain the impact of the Taxonomy of Significant Learning (foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring or valuing, and learning to learn) on your development of learning goals.**

While my courses and assignments have generally covered most of these goals, I have not started from the significance of the goals to the analysis of the course coverage; I have done vice versa, emphasizing what the discipline prioritizes, instead. I have used Bloom's Taxonomy to help me cover most of the learning goals but have not consciously thought of them in the categories used by Fink. Developing the three column table has helped me stop and more deliberately synch all goals with learning activities and assessments. On a personal note, I felt my (previously sometimes referred to as soft, ambitious, touchy-feely, and typical of Miriam) recurring learning goals were very much validated, namely. Human Dimension, Caring, and Learning to Learn (lifelong love for learning).

3. **Explain the impact of ICD on your assessment/feedback activities in the course, including the FIDeLity criteria.**

Giving immediate, discriminating feedback in a loving way has been something I strove to do in the past. My efforts toward meeting these goals have been increased and seem to be paying off. Students are becoming more aware that their efforts – especially in implementing the corrective feedback and needed revisions – are more important in determining their final grades, using the portfolio-type grading I use; the latter emphasizes writing as a process involving revisions and rewrites, not a one-time (the night-before) event. Therefore, feedback is welcomed more as it is only advisory and done with love and care, and not evaluative. (While I did not learn this for the first time in ICD, re-learning it was a worthwhile refresher course activity. Thus the course was very beneficial.)

4. **Explain how ICD influenced your teaching and learning activities.**

I definitely make sure that all the learning goals, activities, assessments, and enhancements are tightly in synch; I also walk students through the syllabus and learning plan to make sure they fully appreciate the synchronicity. The course design component of my course has been emphasized more, as a result.

5. **Explain how you sought to integrate teaching and learning activities with learning goals.**

The three column table helped me more consciously flesh out the relationships between these two elements, making certain that all the assignments are tied closely to learning activities and that they are broken down into small learning tasks that culminate in the course deliverables.

6. **Explain whether ICD had an impact on your own satisfaction in teaching the course.**

Definitely, especially because ICD helped me identify a simply written book that explains integrated course design in very clear ways – the Fink book! Of course, deliberately going through designing the course over the fall semester was very helpful.

7. **Summarize any evidence you have on the impact of the re-designed course on student learning.**

Refer to Q 1 for examples of how situational analysis has helped me design assignments that are immediately useful to students' real, professional pursuits, as well as in designing teams that match students' dispositions.

Because of the students' full time professional schedules, in our re-visioning of the program we realized that we need to introduce hybrid and online courses in order to increase sensitivity to students' needs and real-life situations. The step-by-step course design we went through helped me design a course from scratch and redesign it into a rich hybrid learning format. I have seen a great improvement in the students performance, interest, and assignments, as compared to their efforts as witnessed last semester – in a different course. Students have also commented on how much they are benefiting from the course, and have gone to the Chair to ask that my course be taught in the first semester in order to set the tone and give them the grounding they need for the doctoral program rigor. While I have had similar calls by students elsewhere – albeit in different courses and levels – this group is not ordinarily known for such comments. Such anecdotal evidence leads me to believe that ICD is working to increase student learning.

8. Other comments

This course is very essential for all faculty members, especially those new to the academy and those who have been around but have not had deliberate training in educational theory and pedagogy. Even for the latter, like myself, it is a great refresher course and one that looks at things using somewhat different lenses. The facilitator's ability to conduct the course remains unparalleled. I have signed up to design department wide courses for online offering, mainly due to the increased love for course design gained during this ICD course!