CREATING SIGNIFICANT LEARNING EXPERIENCES

by

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SACS-COC Institute on
Quality Enhancement and Accreditation
Orlando, FL
July 30 - August 2, 2006
My Initial Premise:
The QUALITY of any educational program

= the QUALITY OF STUDENT LEARNING in and from the program

Another Assumption:

• We live in a CHANGING WORLD, and

• These changes dramatically affect the way higher education does operate – and should operate.
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

MY AGENDA

I. What are the Changes that Are Affecting Higher Education?

II. What Should We Be Doing - To Create Better Educational Programs in this New Environment?

III. Review and Conclusions
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

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MY AGENDA

I. Changes Affecting Higher Education?
   ✓ • World
   • US
   • Southern Region
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

1. Changes Affecting Higher Education: WORLD

   • Technology: “World is Flat”
     • Higher Education (HE): A Global Enterprise
     • HE: Even more important now
“Tertiary education [i.e., higher education] is more critical, the flatter the world gets.”

-Thomas Friedman, *The World is Flat* (p. 289)

“[The new world economy] is highly knowledge-intensive - so you must be good at constantly learning. If you stand still, you fall back.”

-J.F. Rischard, *High Noon* (p. 30)
1. Changes Affecting Higher Education: WORLD

- Technology: “World is Flat”
  - Higher Education (HE): A Global Enterprise
  - HE: Even more important now
  - HE: New Ways of Educating
- World Economy: More Market Oriented
  - HE: More Competition
- World Population: Still Growing
  - HE: Lots of people to educate
- World Problems: Not Being Addressed
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

20 Global Issues (from “High Noon”, J. F. Rischard)

I. **Sharing Our Planet Issues:** (some examples)
   - Global warming
   - Deforestation
   - Water deficits

II. **Sharing Our Humanity Issues:**
   - Fight against poverty
   - Education for all
   - Global infectious diseases

III. **Sharing Our Rule Book: Issues Needing Global Regulation**
   - Global financial architecture
   - Illegal drugs
   - International labor and migration rules
1. Changes Affecting Higher Education: WORLD

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- World Population: Still Growing
  - HE: Lots of people to educate
- World Problems: Not Being Addressed
  - HE: Are we preparing people who can address these problems?
MY AGENDA

I. Changes Affecting Higher Education?
   • World
   ✓ • US
   • Southern Region
1. Changes Affecting Higher Education: UNITED STATES

- MORE PRESSURE:
  - Greater awareness that college graduates are not learning well
Evidence That Students Are NOT Having Significant Learning Experiences:

- Employers
- National Study of Adult Literacy
- Collegiate Learning Assessment
- “Declining by Degrees”
- Bok: “Our Underachieving Colleges”
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1. **Changes Affecting Higher Education: UNITED STATES**

   - **MORE PRESSURE:**
     - Greater awareness that college graduates are not learning well
     - Calls for greater accountability

   - **MORE CHALLENGE: Nature of Students**
     - Technologically-savvy (some)
     - Poorly prepared for college (many)

   - **MORE RESOURCES: Intellectual**
MY AGENDA

I. **Changes Affecting Higher Education?**
   - World
   - US
   - Southern Region
**Southern Region:**

- Traditional Economic Base: Declining
- Some Manufacturing Jobs: Outsourced
- Population with HE Degrees: Relatively Low

+ State & Regional Coordination of Efforts to Improve Education, esp. Higher Education
  - SREB
  - SACS
  - Individual State Organizations
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1. Changes Affecting Higher Education: KENTUCKY

   • ALL of the above, + Effort at Postsecondary Education Reform

   • 5 Questions:

   1. Are high school graduates ready? (PREPARATION)

   2. Can they afford higher education? (ACCESS)

   3. Are we adding to the pool of educated citizens? (OVERALL QUANTITY)

   4. Are college graduates prepared for life and work? (OVERALL QUALITY)

   5. Are the people, society and economy of Kentucky benefiting? (OVERALL IMPACT)
1. Changes Affecting Higher Education? KENTUCKY

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5. Are the people, society and economy of Kentucky benefiting? (OVERALL IMPACT)
Conclusions: OUR CHANGING WORLD

• Higher Education is critically important.
• We are not currently doing a very good job.
• It is critically important that we find a way to do our job better.
  • Probably not going to get a lot more money or time.
  • Therefore, we need to learn how to do our job more efficiently and more effectively, i.e., smarter.
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MY AGENDA

I. What are the Changes that Are Affecting Higher Education?

✓ II. What Should We Be Doing - To Create Better Educational Programs in this New Environment?

III. Review and Conclusions
II. What should we be doing about all this?

- **STOP** acting like we’re living in the 19\textsuperscript{th} or 20\textsuperscript{th} century.
- **START** adapting to the world we do live in.
  - **RE-THINK** our ultimate purpose(s).
  - Develop **NEW STRATEGIES** for achieving those purposes.
- **GEAR OURSELVES UP:** Acquire the perspectives, knowledge, and skills we need - individually and organizationally
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We want…

**BETTER STUDENT LEARNING**

which requires

**FACULTY LEARNING ABOUT TEACHING**

which requires

**BETTER TEACHING**

which requires

**BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

We want...

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BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING
BETTER STUDENT LEARNING:

• Need a “higher quality learning experience”.

• What might that mean?
1. **Defining “High Quality Learning Experience”**
   - Different stages in the “learning-living” process
3 FEATURES OF A HIGH QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

1. Students are: ENGAGED

2. Student effort results in: SIGNIFICANT & LASTING LEARNING

3. The learning: ADDS VALUE

During Course/College:  
End of course  
After College:
1. **Defining “High Quality Learning Experience”**

   - Different stages in the “learning-living” process
   - What students learn: It MUST be more than “learning the content”
     - Bloom’s “Taxonomy of Educational Objectives”
       - Knowledge (recall memory)
       - Comprehension
       - Application
       - Analysis
       - Synthesis
       - Evaluation
1. **Defining “High Quality Learning Experience”**
   - Different stages in the “learning-living” process
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     - Bloom’s “Taxonomy of Educational Objectives”
     - Fink’s “Taxonomy of Significant Learning”
Taxonomy of Significant Learning

- **Caring**
  - Developing new...
    - Feelings
    - Interests
    - Values

- **Human Dimensions**
  - Learning about:
    - Oneself
    - Others

- **Learning How to Learn**
  - Becoming a better student
  - Inquiring about a subject
  - Self-directing learners

- **Foundational Knowledge**
  - Understanding and remembering:
    - Information
    - Ideas

- **Application**
  - Skills
  - Thinking: Critical, Creative, & Practical
  - Managing projects

- **Integration**
  - Connecting:
    - Ideas
    - People
    - Realms of life
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In courses with significant learning, students will:

1. **Understand and remember** the key concepts, terms, relationship, etc.

2. Know how to **use** the content.

3. Be able to **relate** this subject to other subjects.

4. Understand the **personal and social** implications of knowing about this subject.

5. **Value** this subject and further learning about it.

6. Know how to **keep on learning** about this subject, after the course is over.
1. **Defining “High Quality Learning Experience”**

   - Different stages in the “learning-living” process
   - What students learn: It MUST be more than “learning the content”
     - Bloom’s “Taxonomy of Educational Objectives”
     - Fink’s “Taxonomy of Significant Learning”
     - AAC&U Liberal Education Outcomes
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

AAC&U: Liberal Education Outcomes

I. KNOWLEDGE
   • Science
   • Social Science
   • Mathematics
   • etc.

II. INTELLECTUAL & PRACTICAL SKILLS
   • Written & Oral Communication
   • Inquiry, critical & creative thinking
   • Etc.

III. INDIVIDUAL & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
   • Civic responsibility & engagement
   • Ethical reasoning
   • Intercultural knowledge and action
   • Etc.
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We want…

**BETTER STUDENT LEARNING** which requires

**BETTER TEACHING** which requires

**FACULTY LEARNING ABOUT TEACHING** which requires

**BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

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**BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**
BETTER TEACHING:

- What can faculty do, to become better teachers?

GENERAL ANSWER:

- Broaden their understanding of what is involved in HIGH QUALITY TEACHING.
- “Model of HIGH QUALITY TEACHING”
A Model of HIGH QUALITY TEACHING

FUNDAMENTALS TASKS
Perform the fundamental tasks of teaching well

STUDENT LEARNING
Students have a significant learning experience

GETTING BETTER
Take the necessary steps to improve one’s teaching over time
FOUR FUNDAMENTAL TASKS of Teaching

- Acquire new ideas on teaching
- Knowledge of subject matter
- Design learning experiences
- Interactions with students
- Course management
- Try new ways of teaching

Impact on STUDENT LEARNING

- DURING the course
- END of the course
- AFTER the course

GETTING BETTER Over Time

Assess the effectiveness of one’s own teaching

Reflect on what else one needs to learn
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

We want…

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Creating Significant Learning Experiences

**Creating Significant Learning Experiences**

**IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING**

We want…

- **BETTER STUDENT LEARNING**
  - which requires
  - **FACULTY LEARNING ABOUT TEACHING**
    - which requires
    - **BETTER TEACHING**
      - which requires
      - **BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**
QUESTION:

• How well is the faculty prepared for these tasks?
FACULTY MEMBERS:

- Take their role as “Subject Matter Specialists” very seriously.
  - Focus of Graduate School
  - Focus of Hiring Process
  - Focus of Promotion & Tenure
- Do NOT take their role as “PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS” as seriously.
  - Especially not the task of “Professional Development.”
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

Getting Better Over Time

Quality of Teaching

Everyone’s Potential

(now)  Time

A

B
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

**Question:**
How much time should faculty members spend each year, learning about “teaching and learning”?

**Observation**
Jet Blue Airlines: The “stay-at-home housewives” who do the reservation work for, are required to spend **4 hours every month** (=48 hours a year), in professional training, learning new skills and keeping up with changes in the company.

**Question:**
Is not “College Teaching” at least as complex as making reservations for an airline?
1991 – ACTIVE LEARNING

1991 – COOPERATIVE LEARNING

1992 – LEARNING STYLES

1993 – CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

1995 – CRITICALLY REFLECTING ON YOUR OWN TEACHING

1995 – EVALUATING YOUR OWN TEACHING

1995 – EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
1996 - 1997 - TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO ENGAGE IDEAS

1997 - TEACHING PORTFOLIO

1997 - DEEP LEARNING

1998 - EFFECTIVE GRADING RUBRICS

1998 - IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF ONESELF AS A PERSON/TEACHER
1996 – 2000 (cont.)

1998 - SERVICE LEARNING

1998 - STRUCTURED ASSIGNMENTS FOR SMALL GROUPS

1999 - PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

1999 - LEARNING COMMUNITIES
2001 - PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

2002 - HOW THE BRAIN WORKS

2002 - LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING

2003 - A TAXONOMY OF SIGNIFICANT LEARNING

2003 - INTEGRATED COURSE DESIGN
2004 – THEORIES OF LEARNING AND MOTIVATION

2004 – TEAM-BASED LEARNING

2004 – LEARNING PORTFOLIOS

2004 – INQUIRY-GUIDED LEARNING

2004 – FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

2004 – WHAT THE BEST COLLEGE TEACHERS DO
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If our faculty can learn - and USE these ideas,

Their teaching will become

HIGH IMPACT TEACHING!
The LEARNING CYCLE

& 3 SOURCES OF LEARNING

Ideas/Literature on COLLEGE TEACHING

LEARN

USE

REFLECT

ASSESS

SHARE

COLLEAGUES
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

Four Levels of Growth as Educators:

- **Attitude**
  - Feelings, Images, Metaphors

- **Philosophy**
  - Values, Beliefs

- **Design Decisions**

- **Skills**
  - Lectures, tests, small group activities, etc.
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Getting Better Over Time

IF – all our faculty can get on a GROWTH CURVE...

Everyone’s Potential
We want... BETTER STUDENT LEARNING which requires BETTER TEACHING which requires FACULTY LEARNING ABOUT TEACHING which requires BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT.
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

We want... BETTER STUDENT LEARNING which requires BETTER TEACHING

which requires FACULTY LEARNING ABOUT TEACHING which requires BETTER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:

• What do institutions need to do, to better enable and empower the faculty as teachers?

My Answer:

• Support the development of college faculty as PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS.
FACULTY AS PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS:

What would that mean?

That college teachers are:

1. Familiar with the literature on college teaching,

2. Using the ideas of “best practice” in their own teaching, and

3. Engaging in continuous improvement regarding current ideas on teaching and their teaching.
Faculty as PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS:

What can a university do, to support this more effectively?

1. Establish expectations
2. Provide support
3. Assess and reward

NOTE: In most institutions, getting faculty to view themselves as “Professional Educators” will constitute a CHANGE OF CULTURE.
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CHANGING FACULTY CULTURE:

Establish Expectations

Provide Support

Assess & Reward
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

The Development of Faculty as Professional Educators

1. **Establish EXPECTATIONS**
   - Hire faculty who want to “learn & get better”
   - Beginning of year: Plan faculty work

2. **Provide SUPPORT**
   - Open up TIME
   - Provide campus-based fac. dev. program

3. **ASSESS & REWARD**
   - Assess teaching more holistically
   - Add “Professional Development” as 4th kind of expected kind of faculty work
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The Development of Faculty as PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

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CAMPUS-BASED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

1. **What are they?**
   - Formal Programs: Improve teaching & learning

2. **How do they work?**
   - Offer workshops, 1:1 consulting, orientation programs for new faculty, etc.

3. **What do they need, to be effective?**
   - A dedicated, professional director
   - Adequate funding & institutional encouragement

4. **National Resource:** POD Network in Higher Education
   - www.podnetwork.org
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The Development of Faculty as PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

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FOUR FUNDAMENTAL TASKS of Teaching

GETTING BETTER Over Time

Knowledge of subject matter
Interactions with students
Course management
Design learning experiences

Try new ways of teaching

Assess the effectiveness of one’s own teaching

Acquire new ideas on teaching

Reflect on what else one needs to learn

Impact on STUDENT LEARNING

• DURING the course
• END of the course
• AFTER the course

GETTING BETTER Over Time

Reflect on what else one needs to learn
ASSESSING TEACHING MORE HOLISTICALLY

1. Did they DESIGN THEIR COURSES well?

2. Did they INTERACT/COMMUNICATE with students well?

3. Did the course experience result in SIGNIFICANT KINDS OF STUDENT LEARNING?

4. Did the faculty member make a significant effort to IMPROVE their teaching?
# Creating Significant Learning Experiences

## Criteria:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Information:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Course Design</td>
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<td>2. Interaction with students</td>
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Creating Significant Learning Experiences

The Development of Faculty as PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

1. Establish EXPECTATIONS
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   - Beginning of year: Plan faculty work

2. Provide SUPPORT
   - Open up TIME
   - Provide campus-based fac. dev. program

3. ASSESS & REWARD
   - Assess teaching more holistically
   - Add “Professional Development” to promotion & tenure criteria.
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

PRIMARY DIMENSIONS OF FACULTY WORK

1. Teaching
2. Research & Creative Activity
3. Service
4. Professional Development
   • Teaching
   • Research
   • Service
   • Professional Self-Management

TOTAL: 100%
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

The Development of Faculty as PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

1. **Establish EXPECTATIONS**
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Creating Significant Learning Experiences

Which is what we want!

- Better Student Learning
- Faculty Learning about Teaching
- Better Teaching
- Better Institutional Support

Improving Teaching and Learning
MY AGENDA

I. How is Our Environment Changing?

II. What Should We Be Doing - To Pursue Quality in this New Environment?

✓ III. Review and Conclusions
Creating Significant Learning Experiences

REVIEW:

1. We Live in a Rapidly Changing World.

2. We Need to Make Some Significant Changes in the Way We Go About Our Business.
CONCLUSIONS:

What Changes Do We Need to Make?

1. INSTITUTIONS: (re: Campus Leaders)

   • Get serious about attending to the quality of our educational programs.

   • Make changes in the way we evaluate teaching and faculty work.
CONCLUSIONS:

What Changes Do We Need to Make?

1. INSTITUTIONS:

2. FACULTY MEMBERS:

   - Take our roles as “Professional Educators” much more seriously.
   - Spend time learning about teaching and learning.
   - Make changes in the way we teach, i.e., in the way we promote student learning.
CONCLUSIONS:

What Changes Do We Need to Make?

1. INSTITUTIONS:

2. FACULTY MEMBERS:

3. FACULTY DEVELOPERS:

   • Realize that we play a critical role in our organizations - as potential change agents.

   • Take our roles as “Professionals” in college teaching and organizational change as seriously as possible.
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IF we all do our part:

1. Our colleges and universities - as institutions using public funds - will become much more effective at achieving their public purpose.

2. Our faculty members will become more empowered as professional educators.

3. Our students will have more “Significant Learning Experiences” while in college.

4. Today’s students - as tomorrow’s adults and citizens - will lead lives that are more informed, more empowered and more responsible.

5. Society will be much stronger - socially, politically, and economically.
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THE END!

Higher Education:

Let’s make it all that it can be and needs to be!