

VISIONS

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ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA COLLEGES

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VISIONS is published annually for the members of the Association of Florida Colleges and reports on issues that have implications for the Florida College System. As such, VISIONS provides a professional forum for the exploration of issues endemic to the Florida College System and provides a proactive voice for the community colleges of Florida.

The views expressed in VISIONS are not necessarily those of the staff, editorial board, or the Board of Directors of the Association of Florida Colleges.

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FOREWARD

On behalf of the AFC Board of Directors and the AFC staff, I am pleased to present you with this issue of Visions: The Journal of Applied Research for the Association of Florida Colleges. As is stated in Visions' mission statement, this publication exists to advance knowledge about current issues impacting the Florida College System and the community college world in general. Founded by Dr. James Wattenbarger, the "father of Florida's community college system", Visions is a venue for spotlighting cutting edge research and best practices in teaching and learning from throughout the Florida College System.

All too often, an overriding focus on legislation, funding, and compliance takes our attention away from the core academic mission of our colleges. It takes effort to turn from these real demands on our time and instead consider how we help students learn, grow, and develop. This issue of Visions contains articles that re-imagine the classroom – looking at new teaching methodologies, new ways to engage nontraditional learners, and new ways to use technology to maximize learning – all topics that must be embraced in the current collegiate environment. In sharing these scholarly writings, the AFC hopes to inspire its members and other higher education practitioners to challenge the status quo and explore new ways to help today's students learn.

It is no secret that Florida's education system continues to be among the nation's best even while in a constant state of change. Since the last issue of Visions was published, the Florida Community College System and Florida Association of Community College (FACC) have been replaced by the Florida College System and the Association of Florida Colleges. The expanded missions inherent in these new names give rise to the challenges AFC members face in terms of developing curriculum for the baccalaureate degrees needed for the economy of tomorrow, while still finding ways to provide developmental education for those students who need it – even when they opt of taking these courses.

To help its members meet these challenges, the

AFC has embraced its goal of providing high quality and impactful professional development. Beyond Visions, professional development may be found in the form of the Certified College Professional program, at workshops offered by AFC's Regions and Commissions, and at the fall Annual Conference. We invite all AFC members to take full advantage of these opportunities, and look forward to see you soon!

This Journal could not published without the contributions of the articles' authors. Our thanks for the time and energy taken to consider new ideas, to test them, to write about what was learned, and for the willingness to transfer knowledge via this medium. Beyond thanking the authors, we must also express appreciation to the Visions Editor-in-Chief, former AFC President Will Benedicks. Dr. Benedicks recently retired from Tallahassee Community College, and his commitment to AFC and to professional development continues to inspire us all. Finally, we recognize the contributions of the AFC Executive Director and the AFC staff who put this publication together. Publishing Visions is a true team effort, and epitomizes our system and association. As a learning organization, AFC is proud to bring you Visions, and we hope you enjoy it.



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2015 AFC President

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GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES:
Articles submitted to Visions should be approximately 1,500 to 2,500 words in length. The style of each article submitted should be guided by the current APA (American Psychological Association) Style Manual and written in clear and concise language that presents the research with clarity of purpose and rationale. All articles submitted will be referred to the Visions Editorial Board and must include a short summary outlining three or four implications of the study/research for the college system. Articles submitted for consideration must also include a short biographical statement describing the author and a signed copyright release statement. Articles submitted will not be returned unless they have been accepted for publication and then only for the final revisions. Permission to reprint must be obtained from the Association of Florida Colleges, 113 East College Avenue, Tallahassee, FL 32301; 850-222-3222. Articles for consideration by the Editorial Board may be submitted at any time for inclusion in the next available issue.

EDITOR'S NOTES

We are proud to present this new edition of Visions, our journal of research for community college higher education. Journals such as this are vital. Our daily lives are changing in many aspects, particularly in higher education. We live at a breakpoint in the historical timeline. From the Ice Age to the Technological Age, from the 8-track to the DVD, from dial-up to Wi-Fi connectivity, as the saying goes, "the times they are a changing". No generation in recorded history has experienced the social and technological changes we have, are and will yet experience. In education the challenges are multifaceted; the non-traditional classroom and student, distance education, applications of new technologies and new pedagogy all are impacting what we do and how we do it.

In 2015, the AFC shifts from offering an annual Convention to a Conference. This will also highlight and showcase our efforts in addressing Florida's changing educational parameters and instructional methods impacting our colleges.

This edition of Visions features articles authored by Florida-based educators for the 25th Annual International Conference on College Teaching and Learning hosted by the Florida State College in Jacksonville in 2014. We extend our thanks to Dr. Bill Ganza at Florida State College at Jacksonville for his assistance in providing this content, and to the authors for permitting its use.

Our goal is to publish Visions on a yearly basis. I encourage all our 28 institutions to actively promote research and pedagogical contributions, and submit an article for publication. We accept them year-round.
Enjoy the read,



Dr. Will Benedicks, Editor
History Department, Program Chair (ret.)
Tallahassee Community College

WHAT IS AFC?

Mission Statement

The Association of Florida Colleges, Inc. is the professional association of Florida's 28 public member institutions of the Florida College System, their Boards, employees, retirees and associates, and the employees of the Division of Florida Colleges. The mission of the Association is to actively promote, represent, and support members and institutions as they provide their students and the citizens of Florida with a world-class college system.

Value Statement

The Mission of the Association is driven by the following values:

1. Professional Growth and Development
2. Advocacy
3. Leadership
4. Community
5. Innovation
6. Networking

Goals

The Association fulfills its mission by accomplishing the following goals:

1. Develop and support professional development, education, and leadership opportunities for the Association's members (Values 1, 2, 3, 5, 6).
2. Advocate for policies, budgets, and programs on behalf of the Association's institutional and individual members (Value 2).
3. Communicate public policy and legislative issues and engage in cooperative research activities related to those issues (Values 2, 3).
4. Increase public awareness of the mission, purpose, and accomplishments of the Florida College System (Values 2, 4, 6).
5. Showcase and reward exemplary programs, practices, activities, and individuals (Values 1, 3, 5, 6).
6. Enhance, encourage and facilitate communication, cooperation, professionalism, and camaraderie among individual and institutional Association members (Values 1, 4, 6).
7. Promote membership by providing professional development and services that ensures an active and vital Association (Values 1, 3, 4, 6).
8. Maintain a fiscally sound organization that is efficiently and effectively managed (Value 3).
9. Provide opportunities for and engage in services to benefit the external community (Values 1, 3, 4, 6).

The Association of Florida Colleges (AFC) was founded in 1949 as the Florida Association of Public Junior Colleges (FAPJC) by the presidents of Florida's first four public community colleges to help the Florida Legislature understand the junior college and to advocate for community colleges in the development of the state's long-range plan for higher education. In 1971, the Association became the Florida Association of Community Colleges. With the addition of baccalaureate programs and subsequent institutional name changes, in 2010, the Association was renamed the Association of Florida Colleges.

Since 1949, the Association's mission and purposes have evolved to meet the needs of member institutions. Today, all 28 of the state's public community and state colleges support the work of the Association through institutional dues as do more than 8,000 individual college employees as individual members.

The Association is organized through network of Chapters, Commissions and Regions. Chapters represent the basic building block for the Association at the college level. Generally, each college has one AFC Chapter; some may have a Chapter at each campus. There are currently 28 AFC Chapters in the state representing all 28 member colleges.

Commissions provide an opportunity for college employees with similar job responsibilities to enhance their professional skills and knowledge and to network, share and recognize exemplary practices with colleagues from around the state. Each commission has an elected board of directors to oversee and plan the commission's activities during the year, and the chair of each commission serves on the Association's Board of Directors. Currently there are fourteen active commissions.

AFC Commissions

Administration	Represents the interests of administrative and business affairs staff.
Adult and Continuing Education	Involves all interested personnel in the development, promotion, and facilitation A&CE.
Career and Professional Employees	Promotes professional growth and exchange of information amongst the career and professional (non-administrative, non-faculty) employees.
Communications and Marketing	Promotes professional growth and development amongst commission members.
Equity	Provides leadership, advice, counsel and opportunity for professional development on EA/EO matters.
Facilities	Promotes the interests and issues of community college's facilities planning and institutional services and to provide to its membership a collaborative environment for sharing ideas, experiences and successes in order to promote best practices and professional development within the multiple disciplines associated with the construction and management of our college's facilities.
Faculty	Promotes quality leadership and professional service and seek solutions on matters relating to faculty.
Healthcare Education	Promotes legislative awareness, professional development, and recognition of best practices in all areas relating to healthcare education.
Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Professional Development	Improves institutional effectiveness, planning and research.
Instructional Innovation (Provisional)	Provides for the participation of the faculty members, administrators, and other concerned personnel in all areas relating to curriculum.
Learning Resources	Represents the interests of Learning Resources personnel.
Occupational and Workforce Education	Represents the interest of Occupational and Workforce Education personnel.
Student Development	Involves members of the Student Affairs offices in carrying out the goals and objectives of the Student Personnel philosophy.
Technology	Represents the interests of Florida's community and state college personnel whose job interests include technology related activities or issues. The Technology Commission strives to enhance student learning, improve institutional effectiveness and promote effective participation in all aspects of technology management, planning, information sharing, eLearning and innovation.
Trustees	Promotes an understanding of the Florida College System amongst trustees and serve in liaison capacity to local and State offices and agencies.

Cultivating Learner Success in the Absence of Active Regulators

By Pascal Roubides, Florida State College at Jacksonville and
Jillian Wojcik, Broward College

Abstract

Converting existing traditional face-to-face courses into their online equivalents quite often results in several important components gone amiss according to the control theory metaphor of eLearning system design. To ensure learner success in courses sans active regulators, redesign of the learning system in its entirety, reclaiming those missing components, or at least instructor intervention may be necessary. This article touches upon the absence of regulators in current online course design and delivery of many courses and discusses strategies of cultivating essential self-regulatory skills to ensure that future learner success in such courses is not held captive of the past.

Introduction

In general, the term scaffold is used to describe a temporary platform used by workers to reach certain heights which can be raised or lowered to different heights as needed by the task at hand. Scaffolds can also be used in the classroom whereby instructors and students together can find an optimal “height” to work on and achieve the learning objectives in a way that is dynamic and engaging.

In teaching and learning, the term *instructional scaffolding* is used to describe a learning process designed to promote a deeper level of learning. It can be viewed as any support given to students during the learning process which must be tailored to the needs of each student (Sawyer, 2006).

Scaffolds in many different forms are usually necessary until students reach higher levels of autonomous learning strategies whereby support levels can be gradually removed. Effective learning environments use instructional scaffolding to aid the student in his/her construction of new knowledge. This is in opposition to the traditional view of the instructor as “sage-on-stage” though not necessarily mutually exclusive. The absence of any type of instructional scaffolding can be seen in many or most Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) which do not in the least employ any obvious instructional strategy other

than a digital version of the “sage-on-stage” paradigm (Roubides, 2013a).

What is most important is the pursuit and promotion of better learning and learning at a higher level, by aiding the student to achieve his/her learning goals through the use of instructional scaffolding. Whether the scaffolding is *contingent* or *expert* (Saye & Brush, 2002), *reciprocal* (Holton & Clarke, 2006) or *technical* (Yelland & Masters, 2007), research has shown that using instructional scaffolding can aid students in developing higher-level thinking skills (Smagorinsky, 2007) as well as improve other important skills such as self-confidence, self-reliance, and self-regulation (Pahl, 2002).

Principles of eLearning in the Facilitator Model

The model of facilitation is a popular type of online instruction (Roubides, 2005) although one of many possible approaches. Facilitation of online classes, much like judicial mediation among litigating parties, is an evolving art and expanding opportunity to empower students and faculty to work together across time and distance. Online activities, communications and interactions require facilitation skills beyond those used in face-to-face settings. Group dynamics in the virtual environment combined with new eLearning standards or technologies, such as for example what is commonly referred to nowadays as Web 2.0 tools, create unique conditions and opportunities calling for specific techniques that may be totally dissimilar to those employed in traditional face-to-face (especially instructor-centered) settings. Counter to the practice of *lecturing*, which implies passive receipt of instruction, online facilitation supports an active learning environment based on a student-centered philosophy (O'Neill, Moore & McMullin, 2005) and implies a process where there is engagement of everyone present in the class. In this model, the facilitator becomes essentially a *learning manager*, a person whose main responsibility is to promote the learning but at the same time provide guidance to and control for and of the learner.

In the faculty-facilitator model, as well as in the student-centered model in general, there are several principles in several categories that are recognized to be of importance. Faculty (ideally) should have knowledge of and/or training in eLearning pedagogies as well as eLearning technologies, but should also have good managerial and social skills. Table 1 presents a non-exhaustive list of skills deemed important in effective eLearning facilitation.

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Table 1

A List of Important Skills for Effective Facilitation

Pedagogical/Technical skills	Managerial/Social skills
<p>Have knowledge of and/or training in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching & learning principles of both traditional & adult education; Different learning & communication styles; Various assessment & evaluation techniques; Current eLearning principles & issues; Diversity & cultural competency issues; Group & interpersonal dynamics; Facilitation principles; Current technology tools; Relevant subject matter. 	<p>Must know how/be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be attentive to learner needs; Maximize outcomes in the allotted time; Be flexible, versatile, insightful; Apply good observation & communication skills, as well as effective listening skills; Promote open communication & constructive conflict; Provide succinct, accurate, timely & constructive feedback; Be caring, compassionate, understanding.

General skills deemed necessary for effective facilitation are a result of knowing what principles guide student learning. Without this knowledge it may not be possible to develop or use skills that are necessary to provide the appropriate instructional scaffolding for successful learning; these principles are universal and can be applied in any setting, however some of these are certainly more pronounced

in an eLearning environment than others. Also some of these principles may apply mostly to the design of a learning system, such as contiguity (for instance, a label for an image should be placed spatially near the image on the display), while others apply mostly to the actual learning process, such as metacognition, cognitive flexibility or self-regulation (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). A list of principles that researchers believe are the main principles guiding student learning and the design of learning systems is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

A List of Important Learning and Design Principles

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contiguity effects Multiple coding effects; Explanation effects Testing effects Spaced effects Organization effects Coherence effects Feedback effects Cognitive load effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segmentation principle Cognitive disequilibrium Cognitive flexibility Goldilocks principle Imperfect metacognition Discovery learning Perceptual-motor grounding Self-regulated learning Anchored learning
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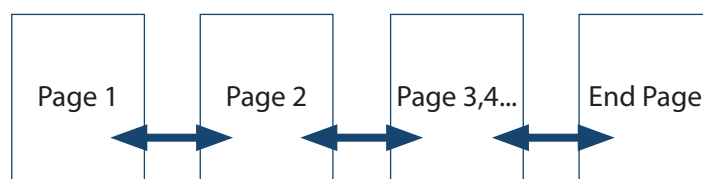
The Control Theory Metaphor

In (Roubides, 2013b) a metaphor from the field of engineering control theory is used to describe a sought-after design of eLearning systems that employ appropriate *controllers* in order to perturb the entire eLearning system aiming at better addressing each individual student's learning needs. In this metaphor, a course designed for online delivery must ideally be non-linear and also employ appropriate controllers/regulators.

Currently, the most common design of courses aimed at online delivery is strictly linear, sometimes two-dimensional and sometimes three-dimensional (Figure 1).

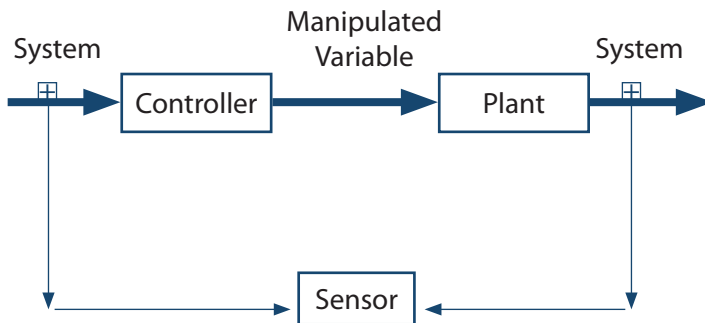
Figure 1

Two-Dimensional Linear Design Concept



In engineering control theory, a controller or regulator is a component of a mechanical system whose purpose is to adjust other system components in order to achieve a pre-determined value or characteristic in the system's plant (the component of the system to be controlled). A mechanical control system usually requires an initial input, a controller, a plant, and a sensor whose role is to provide feedback from the system output back to the controller (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Closed Loop Control System



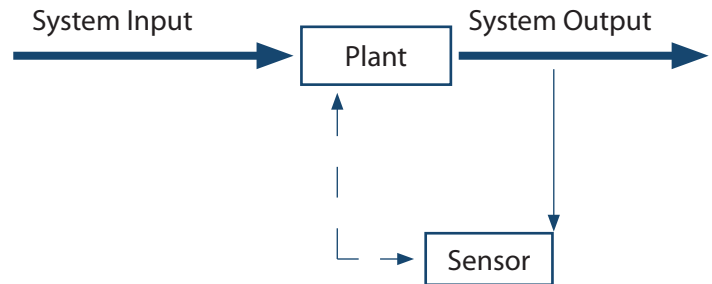
An online course can be considered to be a technical system, similar to the control system described above. Moreover, in all sciences, such as biology, physics, engineering, as well as the social and cognitive sciences, the concept of a *system* is used to describe a group of interacting components connected through a variety of distinct processes (Heisenberg, 1999); therefore all components of an online course should be considered inter-related and inter-connected components of the same active system.

In this sense, faculty, students, learning material and the technology that connects them all are components of the same system that are inter-related and inter-connected by a number of distinct processes. Faculty provide the initial system input through learning material created to achieve predetermined learning objectives at predetermined levels of accomplishment (the system variables to be manipulated). Students (the plant) have a certain output (learning achievement/performance) based on the given input, which is determined by assessments (the sensor) designed and provided by the faculty. Based on the initial output, new or adjusted input may be (and usually is) necessary in order to manipulate, change, or maintain the level of achievement displayed.

However in the most typical linear design of online courses, the system lacks a controller thus the system is now employing a sensor whose feedback is directed to the plant itself. Recall that in the control theory metaphor, the plant is the learner, and the learner may or may not have the ability, knowledge or experience to even interpret the feedback and self-regulate (Artino, 2008), constituting the

sensor itself either nearly useless or simply becoming just an assessor of the system output (Figure 3).

Figure 3
A system without a controller



Using Scaffolding to Promote Self-Regulation:

A System Controller

In several research articles (see for example, Hogan & Pressley, 1997, Jelfs, Nathan, & Barrett, 2004, Blanton, Stylianou, & David, 2009, Belland, 2014) different instructional scaffolding techniques are presented for traditional face-to-face or blended settings. These techniques may either be integrated or used individually, depending on the learning objectives and may be adapted for use in a fully online environment. The faculty's ultimate goal in employing scaffolding techniques is offering just enough assistance to guide the students toward independence and self-regulation.

In the facilitation/student-centered model, students in online courses are empowered with the ability to take control of their own learning and are not merely passive recipients of instruction. They can log in at times that are convenient to them, carefully construct their discussion contributions before sharing them, and complete assessments almost immediately upon feeling prepared and ready, many times also receiving automated instant feedback. Some online students relish the fact that they don't have to see their instructor in person, perhaps concluding that if they miss an assignment or fail an exam, they will not have to endure a possible look of judgment on their instructor's face.

While having control and responsibility over learning does sound ideal, it does not come without challenges. Students in online classes have to take the initiative to log into their class frequently in order to participate; presumably no one will be standing over their shoulder reminding them to do so. Online students also must be motivated to complete assignments and assessments on time. Having control over one's academic schedule can often lead to schoolwork being continually put off until a later time, which often leads to procrastination, cramming, missed deadlines and overall poor performance and retention. Additionally, online students may also

be responsible for learning the course material on their own. In many cases, there is no lecture (video or text) or other synchronous (or asynchronous) setting in which to passively receive information as is commonly being done in most traditional “sage-on-stage” settings. Instead, online students must be active participants in their own learning, seeking out help when needed.

In order for students to be successful in their online classes, they must be able to regulate their learning, their motivation, and their belief in their ability to learn the material and reach their learning goals. In other words, they need to be *self-regulated*. Self-regulation refers to “the processes that learners use to systematically focus their thoughts, feelings, and actions on the attainment of their goals” (Schunk, 2012, p. 441) and is not to be mistaken for meaning that students must be able to be self-taught. Not all students have the self-regulatory skills needed to be successful in an online course.

Fortunately, self-regulation is a skill that can be learned (Zimmerman, 2000). “Effective methods for teaching self-regulation often include exposing students to social models, teaching them to use learning strategies, giving them practice and corrective feedback, and assisting them to evaluate their learning goal progress” (Schunk, 2012, p. 436). These teaching methods may work well in a traditional face-to-face classroom, but the methods may look different in an online setting.

It has been argued that students who possess self-regulatory skills are those most successful in online classes (Artino, 2008; Chang, 2005; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004; Kauffman, 2004; Yang, 2006). Specifically, the self-regulatory processes that have the greatest impact on academic success include self-monitoring, self-evaluation, time management, modeling and collaboration, self-efficacy, and task value. Instructional scaffolding of self-regulatory strategies employed within the online classroom can positively influence students’ self-regulation abilities.

Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring is the act of observing and recording one’s own academic behaviors. In order to develop self-monitoring skills, students need to learn to keep track of what they are doing and how they are thinking so they can adjust their thoughts and behaviors in order to complete tasks and meet their goals. Research has shown that students in physical classrooms can be taught self-monitoring skills with the help of the faculty (Carr & Punzo, 1993; Trammel, Schloss, & Alper, 1994). In the online classroom, parameters need to be set in place in order to promote students’ self-monitoring. There are various approaches that faculty can use to promote self-monitoring in the online classroom. For example, faculty can embed prompts within their course material that ask/require students to reflect on their understanding (Artino, 2008; Yang, 2006); making sure that the class gradebook

is up-to-date so that students can monitor their progress (Artino, 2008); utilizing available course tools such as discussion forums as a platform for students to keep a daily record of their performance and progress (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004). Help-seeking behaviors should be encouraged by online faculty, through email and discussion forums, so that students can feel welcome to reach out for assistance when they may struggle (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004). Online faculty should also consider providing students with a note-taking matrix tool to help students gather and organize information (Kauffman, 2004). Additionally, faculty can set up automated prompts asking/reminding students to ensure that necessary information has been gathered and/or provide reminders to students aiming at improving their note taking (Kauffman, 2004).

Self-evaluation and reflection

Self-evaluation and reflection are key components of self-regulation. When students evaluate themselves, they are determining what they know, what they don’t know, and what they want to know. Self-evaluation and reflection also helps students recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as their beliefs and possible misconceptions. Essentially, this skill allows students to be able to set attainable goals. There are several ways in which faculty can promote student self-evaluation and reflection through the use of instructional scaffolding. Providing opportunities for journaling is one such way (Chang, 2005). Journals “help students organize and control their learning process and reflect on thoughts that emerge when learning” (Chang, 2005, p. 227). Blogs are a popular form of online journaling that faculty could consider using in conjunction with the learning management system. Faculty should utilize grading rubrics and sample or example peer submissions so that students have the opportunity to self-evaluate their own work (Artino, 2008; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004). Peer feedback on draft assignments is another way for students to self-evaluate their work (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004). In addition, other elaboration strategies can be utilized that allow students to paraphrase and/or link new information to what they already know (Yang, 2006).

Time management

A student’s ability to regulate and manage their own time has a significant effect on their ability to succeed in an online course. Interacting in an online course requires two to three times the amount of time needed for a face-to-face course (Palloff & Pratt, 1999). It is a common misconception that because online courses are more convenient they are also easier than traditional courses. Students who struggle with time management are more likely to perform poorly in online courses and/or not complete all courses they enrolled in (Roblyer, 1999). Gibson (1998) noted that students’ persistence in online

courses is related to their self-efficacy, which is related to students' perceptions of their ability to manage time effectively. Self-regulated students are aware of deadlines and the time needed to complete assignments, are able to prioritize tasks, and evaluate how their study time is spent and reprioritize as necessary (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997).

Time management skills are an essential component of self-regulation, and online faculty can help promote these skills in several ways. Online faculty can include prompts to record study time in order to help students assess where they spend their time, so that they can make adjustments when necessary. Chang (2005) conducted a study in which students in a blended course were asked to complete study time recording forms throughout the semester. Results showed that by taking time to record their study time, students were able to improve their study performance. "Most of the time students were unaware of how much study time they wasted until they kept a detailed log" (Chang, 2005, p. 227). The study showed an increase in students' self-regulatory behaviors and an improvement in students' intrinsic goal orientation. In addition to helping students become more aware of how they spend their time, online faculty can proactively help students avoid procrastination by offering intermediate assignment deadlines, forcing students to break an assignment into smaller steps thereby facilitating their progression toward completion of that assignment (Artino, 2008). An online course calendar posted for students detailing assignments, course activities, and/or due dates for those activities is an easy, yet very useful way, that faculty can help students with tracking time during a course (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004). Dabbagh & Kitsantas (2004) also recommend offering students suggestions for managing the course content on a daily or weekly basis.

Modeling and collaboration

For many online courses, class discussions using discussion boards/forums is the main instructional activity, with the purpose of encouraging students to reflect, challenge, and share ideas about the course material with their classmates and instructor. Research has shown that students' online interactions are typically shallow (Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006), most likely due to a lack of guidance from online faculty or a lack of a certain needed structure. Online faculty must take a greater role in organizing and scaffolding students' learning in online discussions. Online faculty can model appropriate posts in the discussion forum, as well as acknowledge and reinforce well-written student posts, so that students can regulate their own contributions to the discussions (Artino, 2008).

Students can also benefit from modeling by their peers. By encouraging collaboration, online faculty can help promote self-regulatory skills. "Although it may seem paradoxical, enabling students to become highly

self-regulated may require putting individuals in learning situations with certain degrees of other-regulation" (Kollar & Fischer, 2006, p. 426). Other-regulation from faculty and peers may be even more important in online courses where students do not benefit from regular face-to-face interactions. By encouraging students to collaborate and work in teams, they will provide regulatory support for each other through project planning, monitoring, and reflecting (Artino, 2008). Additionally, Whipp & Chiarelli (2004) found that students "used the continuous feedback of their peers to make judgments about the quality of their own work" (p. 15). Students also reported that the constant presence of their peers and faculty in the online discussion forums helped provide an incentive for continued participation, and several students reported using peers' online discussion posts to plan and shape their own work (Whipp & Chiarelli, 2004). Modeling, collaboration, and other-regulation can have a direct benefit for the promotion of students' self-regulation.

Self-efficacy

Bandura (1986) defined self-efficacy as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (p. 391). According to Schunk (2005), students with strong self-regulatory skills also tend to have high self-efficacy with learning. Online faculty can help support students' self-efficacy by offering detailed and effective feedback, which helps students see progress toward their goals, make adjustments toward reaching these goals, and experience enactive mastery (Artino, 2008). Faculty do not have to limit feedback only to assignments; they can — and should — communicate with the students frequently via email to discuss students' progress and goals and provide task feedback (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004, Artino, 2008). In online discussion forums, faculty can encourage, acknowledge and reinforce student contributions (Artino, 2008). Online faculty can also consider embedding automated feedback within the course materials designed to build academic self-efficacy (Kauffman, 2004). However, Yang (2006) also studied the effects of embedded strategies on students' use of self-regulated learning strategies in an online environment. While the study found that performance control strategies and cognitive strategies had an effect on students' self-regulation, self-efficacy strategies through online discussions did not have an effect on improving students' self-regulation. "[S]ince student interactions through online discussions were performed at the level of chatting among group members, peer or attribution feedback did not exert a strong power to the use of their [self regulated learning strategies]" (Yang, 2006, p. 266). Perhaps peer and attribution feedback could be facilitated through online discussions if faculty set up or intentionally design the activity more effectively; this would be an area where more study may be required.

Task value

Task value can be defined as the extent to which students find a task interesting, important and useful (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995). “Students with greater personal interest in a topic and those who view the activity as important or useful are more likely to use adaptive self-regulatory strategies” (Schunk, 2005, p. 87). Online faculty should outline the relevance of each learning task that is assigned, so that students understand how their coursework relates and contributes to their personal goals, interests, and values. It is also suggested that online faculty offer problem-based learning and authentic tasks in order to make the course relevant for students, thereby increasing their motivation to participate and engage (Artino, 2008). Artino & Stephens (2006) state that, “problem-based learning cycles, rooted in contemporary (if not controversial) issues within the field of study, can not only capture students’ immediate interest but can also help them appreciate the larger social, real-world relevance and importance of what they are learning” (p. 180). Additionally, the use of media in the form of graphics, videos, and audio can enhance student learning by providing them with multiple ways in which they can

process information (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004). These instructional scaffolding techniques can ultimately lead to students’ increased interest and motivation for learning, which positively impacts their self-regulatory skills.

Conclusion

The Control Theory Metaphor can be used to describe an ideal design of eLearning systems. However, in the most typical linear learning system design, the system often lacks a necessary controller. This leaves the student (the plant) left to make adjustments to his or her own output based on assessment feedback (the sensor). This ability to make adjustments can also be referred to as the ability to self-regulate.

Overall, online students should be empowered to be in control of their own learning. Likewise, online faculty should feel equally empowered to have a positive influence on how their students control their own learning. By encouraging students’ self-regulatory skill development through the use of instructional scaffolding strategies such as those outlined in this monogram, online faculty can help support student success in online classes, thus contributing to the overall success of any learning system employed.

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Prof. Pascal Roubides has taught a myriad of on ground and online courses in several disciplines for many institutions of higher learning over the past 15 years. He is an academic faculty, an instructional designer, an educational researcher, and a business executive. His eLearning experience includes a long involvement in instruction, course development and instructional design, as well as academic research. His areas of expertise are eLearning, Mathematics, and Engineering. He has been the recipient of multiple awards, honors, distinctions, and has published a multitude of articles and research papers in the above areas. He is a committed lifelong learner with a passion for excellence, both in and outside of the classroom, and he is currently involved in developing technology solutions for educational telecommunications and academic integrity, both domestically and internationally.



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Bringing Learning Back to the Future: Using the Workshop Approach to Engage the 21st Century Learner

By Urshela Wiggins Atkins, Polk State College

Introduction

Considering the current popularity of online learning and distance education, the question for today's educators inevitably becomes: "Can the face-to-face classroom still be relevant and engaging to the 21st century learner?" Of course, the answer to this question is a resounding "yes!" Traditional face-to-face learning can be just as, or even more, engaging as the online platform; however, the standard methods of delivery must be modified in the actual classroom setting. The primary focus "must shift from a teaching-centered paradigm," primarily lecture-based instruction, "toward a learner-centered paradigm," where students are actively engaged in hands-on activities (Roehl, Reddy & Shannon, 2013, p. 45). This active learning approach is a valuable method of instruction, since it "requires students to become participants instead of passive learners who [simply] listen to lectures" (Haury & Rillero, 1994, p. 15).

A useful method to facilitate active learning in the traditional classroom is the workshop model of instruction, which is a "means for organizing instructional time" that utilizes a shorter lecture for the demonstration of teaching points (Fisher, 2006, p. 2). The majority of the class time is then devoted to the students actively modeling the teaching demonstration, individually or in collaborative groups, while the instructor guides the students through hands-on practice (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987, p. 34). The dynamic learning environment created through the workshop structure can be enhanced by various technology-driven activities and readily adapted for multiple disciplines in various topics of study.

Active Learning in the Traditional Classroom

Traditionally, the face-to-face classroom has been centered on lecture-based instruction, which focuses more on the instructor and moves the students to the periphery of the learning module. According to Bligh (2000), who cites several research studies, "Lecturing is still the most common method when teaching adults. In spite of

educational research and changing technology, surveys over decades show remarkably little change" (p. 6). This type of instruction presents little to no engagement, since it relegates the student to a completely passive role. Research demonstrates that the lecture-based classroom is not successful or conducive to learning, and "it is therefore suggested that teachers...use other methods [of instruction] wherever possible" (p. 24).

Although lecturing still remains the predominant method of instruction, studies show that students repeatedly express dissatisfaction for the lecture-based classroom. Bligh (2000) asserts that "there can be little doubt about the unpopularity of the lecture system amongst students... [and] in a survey of eight colleges and universities by students there was a consistent desire for more seminars and fewer lectures" (p. 20). As a result of the negative student response toward the lecture-based classroom, online learning has become increasingly more popular because it encourages students to play a more active role in their own learning through technology, and distance learning often encompasses engaging activities that require students to consistently practice their newly acquired skills. Subsequently, studies show that when comparing both traditional and online classes, students "have expressed more satisfaction from the computer mediated learning and rated the learning as more effective," mainly because the online learning platform is more "interactive" (Rashty, 1999, p. 1). However, the same hands-on methodologies inherent in online learning can also be implemented in the traditional classroom, specifically when the lecture is minimized and student-centered instruction maximized (Roehl, Reddy & Shannon, 2013, p. 45).

The success of active learning is evident from the correlation between hands-on practice in the face-to-face classroom and testing data. Everly (2013) states, "Students who had active learning activities in the classroom scored significantly higher on a standardized assessment test than students who received lecture only" (p. 150). In other words, students can be just as successful in a traditional classroom, if the instruction is centered on engaging

activities that motivate students to learn “how” rather than learn “what” (Rashty, 1999, p. 2). While data shows that students rate online courses high for learning and retention, studies also indicate that students actually prefer face-to-face classes when these courses are conducted using hands-on activities that promote student “participation and involvement” (p. 2). Student engagement in the classroom is associated with the retention of course material, and ultimately with student success rates.

Using the Workshop Model to Facilitate Hands-on Learning

When implementing active learning in the classroom, the primary consideration for the instructor should be how to integrate the hands-on activities with traditional teaching methods. The workshop model is an effective method, since it minimizes the lecture in favor of more active student practice. (Calkins, 1986, p. 189). Originally implemented in the primary school grades, the workshop approach is easily adaptable for all educational levels and is particularly valuable for college learners because it requires adult students to take ownership of their learning.

Figure 1

Workshop structure - 1 to 1 ½ hour instruction



Components of the Workshop Approach

What makes the workshop model effective for active learning is the organization that it gives to the course format (Fisher, 2006, p. 2). The primary elements of the workshop model are: the mini-lesson, the work time and the share session, and it is the structure of each of these elements that ensures maximum student involvement. This author uses the workshop method in composition courses

and will illustrate how the approach can heighten student engagement and active learning in the writing process.

Mini-lesson. The mini-lesson is similar to the traditional lecture in that the instructor is teaching; however, the topic of instruction is more of a demonstration or model of some skill that the students will eventually practice in class, either individually or in a group setting. Calkins (1986) notes that “the mini-lesson is our forum for making a suggestion to the whole class – raising a concern, exploring an issue, modeling a technique, reinforcing a strategy” (p. 193). Most importantly, to optimize student practice time, the mini-lesson should only be between 10-20 minutes of course time, and is “short, focused and direct” (Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001, p. 10).

As an introductory opening to the mini-lesson, the instructor briefly connects the current lesson with topic material from the previous lecture. According to Calkins (1986), creating learning extensions between sessions reactivates the students’ knowledge of previous teaching points (p. 189). The instructor then specifically models concepts and skills for that day’s lesson to the whole class as a group. Next, the instructor models a second demonstration with whole class participation. As a final component of the mini-lesson, the instructor connects the demonstrations with the upcoming independent work time, elucidating on student expectations and what should be accomplished during this work period (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987, p. 34).

To illustrate, in the writing course, after making connections from the previous to the current lesson, this author models the elements of a narrative story to the class. First, this author shows the students a completed professional model of the story, making sure to highlight the beginning, middle and end and explaining each part for the students to review and make notations. Next, this author then involves the whole group in working through creating a class short story based on the model. Then this author elicits responses from the class on the direction of the story, ensuring that students pay attention to the three main elements of the narration. After reviewing the finished class story, this author ends the mini-lesson with instructions and expectations for students to practice this skill as they move on into the work period phase of the workshop. It is imperative that the mini-lesson be brief, ideally not taking up more than 20 minutes of instructional time.

Workshop time. The actual workshop is the next component in the workshop model and is the most important element for hands on practice in the traditional classroom. After the mini-lesson, which is more instructor centered, the workshop time completely involves the student actively working on some activity related to the instruction, either individually or in a group. During this time, the students take center stage and are actively engaging in hands-on activities that are focused on the

current course topic (Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001, p.3).

The instructor's role during this workshop time is one of a facilitator, who circulates around the classroom observing and providing assistance to students where needed. Fletcher and Portalupi (2001) explain that the workshop practice period is a "perfect time for instructors to observe students as they write and be available should any questions arise" (p. 48). The instructor might also conference with the students, individually or as whole groups, during this time to gauge work progress and to ensure that students are remaining on task. It is vital, from a time standpoint, that the instructor keeps these conferences brief so that she has time to confer with all students or groups (Calkins and Harwayne, 1987, p. 34).

Returning to the writing classroom to illustrate, this author has been successful using group activities where students collaborate on some element of the writing process to create a whole group result. In the group setting, the students are instructed to collaborate with each other to construct a cohesive story with a beginning, middle and end that simulates the model from the mini-lesson. A PowerPoint screen shot is utilized to keep the model visible to students for reference as they collaborate. During the group practice time, this author circulates from group to group, reviewing the progress of the stories, giving feedback on the narrative elements, and ensuring that all group members are equally contributing to writing the group's story.

Cooperative group activities, like the one this author uses as an illustration, are useful as students "extend their comprehension...strategies through peer learning" (Fisher, 2006, p. 2). In this collaborative environment, students will not only receive feedback from the instructor, but they are also afforded the opportunity to "assist and coach" each other as they actively work toward the common goal of the assigned activity (p. 4). Cooperative learning during the actual workshop time works especially well with adult learners as they move toward more academic independence.

Share session. The last stage in the workshop instructional model is the share session, where the instructor reconvenes the class back from individual or group activities and has the students share the results of their practice. Calkins (1986) asserts that "the overt purpose of the sessions is to support work in progress," and to also serve as "public, teacher-supported conferences" (p. 190). In a whole class discussion, students openly share successes or failures of their individual or group collaborations. According to Ray and Laminack (2001), "Students share strategies, problems, and insights from their day's work" (p. 55). The share session is a time for students to voice concerns or articulate challenges that they may have encountered with aspects of the assignment or practice activity, while also being able to listen to other

students' input throughout the class.

The share session is also an opportunity for students to present their work to the class for instructor feedback, especially on exemplary work that can serve as additional models for other students and their work. For example, in the writing workshop for narrative group practice, this author has each group share one element of their collaborative story that they feel is the most successful, either the beginning, middle, or end of the story. In sharing a particularly successful element of the stories, the whole class can get different perspectives on how each group approached the assignment, and possibly get new insight on their own work.

An added benefit of the share session is that the instructor can use this time as an informal assessment opportunity to gauge if students have a working knowledge of newly acquired skills. The instructor can then use this feedback to guide further instruction, adjusting teaching points for elements that students may need additional practice and improvement.

Additionally, in the college classroom, the share session can act as a class discussion forum where students can reflect on their performance, acquisition of skills and strategies, and future goals for further learning. Therefore, the share session, gives the adult learner the opportunity, through insightful discourse between the instructor and the whole class, to think more analytically about the instructional processes in relation to their own personal learning goals (Calkins, 1986, p. 190).

Integrating Technology in the Workshop Classroom

To ensure the engagement of the "digital natives," or technologically savvy students who "have been raised on a daily dose of these new technologies," it is vital for the instructor in the traditional classroom to supplement instruction with a wide-range of technology (Wynn, 2013, p. 22). The structure of the workshop model allows for various types of technologies to be integrated into the curriculum to reach these 21st century learners.

During the mini-lesson, presentation software programs are useful to communicate lecture points and to also demonstrate instructional processes. This author uses PowerPoint and Prezi presentation programs as visual aids to illustrate various writing procedures and activities that students will practice during the actual workshop time. Additionally, presentation software can also be used during the workshop period to display the demonstration model for students to reference as they perform specific activities from the mini-lesson.

Subject-related videos from online sources, such as YouTube and TeacherTube, are also useful during the mini-lesson to enhance teaching points and demonstrate different aspects of the lecture. Using technology in the workshop

model not only affords the instructor a better opportunity to engage the students with topic-related material, it also allows for better communication for the instructor to reach students with varying learning styles (Rafool, Sullivan & Al-Bataineh, 2012, p. 67). Incorporating technological tools, such as videos and presentation software, into the classroom are essential for “optimum” student engagement, and as a result, increase the effectiveness of learning (Wynn, 2013, p. 23). Research indicates that adult students prefer class lectures that are supplemented with visual material and that students have a better understanding of course content when it is accompanied by a visual illustration (p. 27).

Adapting the Workshop Approach for Various Subject Disciplines

Traditionally considered a methodology specific only to literacy development and the reading and writing curriculum, the workshop approach is a useful instructional method across various disciplines where lecturing is limited in favor of active student practice. Hands-on learning has long been an important element in the science disciplines, since laboratory investigations, which require students to actively test observations under the direct tutelage of the instructor, are the hallmark of science instruction (Haury & Rillero, 1994). Therefore, the workshop approach, with its emphasis on active learning, is compatible with the science curriculum as it provides more instructional structure to guide the traditional science classroom.

The workshop method can also be used effectively in mathematics curriculum and can provide students ongoing practice with complex mathematical problems, while the instructor models and guides these processes. A sample mini-lesson for a mathematics curriculum can be a demonstration of some mathematical skill, concept, or procedure that the students will then independently perform in the workshop period. During the share session, the mathematics instructor might do informal assessments to adapt the instruction where necessary, maybe “increasing or decreasing the complexity of the problem, providing simpler or greater numbers, [or] providing an extension that takes the students’ mathematical thinking deeper” (New York City Department of Education, 2003).

Chabat (2005) explains that the workshop method is also a beneficial approach for social studies instruction, and suggests that the social studies mini-lesson time can be used for putting the lesson in historical context with various multi-media visuals and correlating textual

documents. While in the workshop period, students can choose from various types of content-related documents to teach each other in a jigsaw activity, and then present their respective materials to the class during the share session for feedback (p. 73).

The workshop approach is an adaptable tool for most disciplines in a traditional classroom setting where the lecture would otherwise be the primary method of instruction. The majority of class time can focus on skill development and problem solving through hands-on learning.

Results and Findings

The key to the efficacy of the workshop approach is that its structure offers students the hands-on practice time that traditional lecture-based instruction typically does not. The student-centeredness inherent in the workshop environment “provides a context for students to learn and “perfect their craft” and to independently hone newly acquired skills (Fisher, 2006, p.2). Fisher (2006) elaborates on the independence that the workshop affords students:

The workshop provides students an opportunity to move toward greater independence facilitated by a

To reach the 21st century learner and compete with the online platform, the face-to-face classroom must be engaging and interactive...Using the workshop approach in combination with current technology, an instructor can create a classroom setting that is vibrant, dynamic, and engaging for the 21st century learner and students beyond.

series of learning events, which allows them to assume more responsibility for literacy tasks through increasing competency. This echoes the tradition of the workshop as a place for apprenticeship where novices learn a craft under the watchful eye of a skilled and knowledgeable guide. (p. 2)

This paradigm is ideal for adult learners, since it puts more responsibility on college students for their own learning and gives them opportunities for setting personal study goals. Fletcher and Portalupi (2001) agree that the workshop is similar to traditional apprenticeships where the “novice” would work alongside the “master craftsman” to learn a trade or craft (p. 2-3). This is another trait of the workshop approach that is valuable to college level students in that it is reminiscent of the actual on-the-job

training that many adult learners will experience in their future careers. The workshop puts students “on the spot” and motivates them to be cognizant of their current and future learning statuses (p. 3).

Conclusions

To reach the 21st century learner and compete with the online platform, the face-to-face classroom must be engaging and interactive. The workshop model provides the necessary instructional environment that fosters active engagement, hands-on learning, and student-centered instruction, all vital components for keeping the traditional classroom relevant. (Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001, p. 2). Using the workshop approach in combination with current technology, an instructor can create a classroom setting that is vibrant, dynamic, and engaging for the 21st century learner and students beyond.

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Urshela Atkins is a tenured professor of English at Polk State College (PSC), where she has been teaching since 2011. Before becoming a faculty member at PSC, Atkins was a high school English, speech, and journalism teacher for over 6 years, and she also worked at several Florida colleges and universities as an adjunct instructor. Holding a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Florida and a master's degree in English from the University of North Florida, Atkins is a subject-matter expert in composition, reading, rhetoric, and literature. Her professional and research concentrations are in the field of literary theory and criticism, and she was recently invited to present a critical paper at the annual Edgar Allan Poe conference in New York. In March 2014, Atkins presented this paper at the 25th International Conference on College Teaching and Learning, and during the conference received the Distinguished New Faculty Award for her innovative approaches to teaching college composition.

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Instructional Strategies that Support Non-Traditional Student Learning at the Post Secondary Level

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Abstract

The population of non-traditional students has been rising over the last few years. Statistics indicate that this trend should continue in the years to come (Forbus, Newbold, Mehta, 2011). A contributing factor to the increase of non-traditional students returning to college is that education is more accessible to a diverse student population compared to previous years (Cavotie, Kopera-Frye, 2007). This paper discusses innovative programs, such as the Academic Writing Assistance Program, Mathematics Assistance Program, study skills support, reference and research assistance as well as technological support, which help the non-traditional student meet success at the university level.

Traditional vs. Non-Traditional Students

The population of non-traditional students has been rapidly rising over the last few years. Statistics indicate that this trend should continue in the years to come (Forbus, Newbold, Mehta, 2011). A contributing factor to the increase of non-traditional students returning to college is that education has been more accessible to a diverse student population compared to previous years (Cavotie, Kopera-Frye, 2007). This sub group of post secondary students enters the college environment with unique educational needs that require specific academic support in order for them to meet success in their educational endeavors.

The traditional college student is a person who starts their post-secondary endeavors directly after high school. They represent the population comes from a middle to upper socioeconomic class. Along with these characteristics they have a strong support system with family and friends and have an abundant amount of resources to pull from. Since traditional students typically come straight from high school they see college as an extension of their high school experiences (Strage, 2008). The stereotypical traditional student is vastly different from their peers who are non-traditional students.

Strage (2008) describes the non-traditional student

as an individual representing an older demographic. Sometimes these students may transition from a two-year institution into a four year institution to complete their post-secondary degree. Non-traditional students may also not have a high school diploma and rather a General Education Diploma (GED). Cavotie and Kopera-Frye (2007) also depict that non-traditional students frequently have no familial history of attending college and sometimes become the first generation in their family to pursue a degree at the post-secondary level. Non-traditional students usually have commitments to outside obligations, such as a job and family, which become the priority ahead of attending college. According to Forbus, Newbold, Metha (2011) the non-traditional student brings a different set of academic experiences to the college classroom, are less involved with social activities on campus, and are not concerned with participating in the college experiences that most traditional students value.

Non-traditional students have different motivators form those of traditional students as to their reasons for attending college. Non-traditional students prefer learning to be more in depth and applicable to the real world (Strage, 2008). Forbus, Newbold, Metha (2011) also indicate that college professors are struggling with instructing non-traditional students because their stress factors and coping mechanisms are vastly different from those of traditional students. According to Strage (2008) non-traditional students should be matched with professors who understand and can meet their instructional needs as a unique subset of students. Furthermore; these students must be offered instructional interventions and strategies that will support achievement at the post-secondary level in all disciplines of study.

Existing Classroom Strategies for Non-Traditional College Students

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning has become a common approach in all levels of education. It allows the instructor to observe student learning and the ability of the student to be a part of

a team. Cooperative learning fosters the synthesis of facts through analysis by a group of students. An intellectual discussion often results about the topic or issue at hand when this strategy is utilized.

Previous research reveals that there are several types of small group cooperative learning strategies at the college level that are beneficial for non- traditional students. Small group cooperative learning promotes higher order thinking skills and inquiry based knowledge acquisition for college students (McKeachie, 1986). Below is a list of small group cooperative learning strategies that can be utilized in the college learning environment:

- 1.) Learning circles - students are given inter-dependent tasks to complete which helps promote learning (Johnson, Johnson, Holubc, 1994).
- 2.) Group investigations- used to give students more flexibility in the tasks that they are assigned as group members. Group discussions play an integral part in this instructional strategy. The group members present results of the investigation to the class as a whole.
- 3.) Jig saw strategy- requires each student to complete a specific activity that will reveal a piece of the information needed for the curriculum being taught.
- 4.) Learning cell strategy- requires small groups of students develop questions to pose to the other students about a specific reading or part of a particular curriculum (McKeachie, 1999).
- 5.) Student teams- offer academic assistance to other students with the team regarding information in the curriculum being taught. The student teams compete against each other in a game show format to review the material being studied.
- 6.) Facilitated peer groups- allow the instructor to participate as a facilitator as well as a peer. Activities for facilitated groups include discussions on readings, curriculum, or a group investigation.

Collaborative Learning

Previous research indicates that collaborative learning strategies require students to immerse themselves in the classroom and the learning process. It fosters student participation in structured inquiry and academic conversations (Bruffee, 1999). The questioning of each others' view points along with the application of concepts to support that view point is an essential part of collaborative learning. The ability of a student to formulate an idea and critically analyze that idea is the true goal of cooperative learning. The student must tap into prior knowledge and construct additional knowledge through group debate and discussion. The instructor must allow the group to perform their tasks and evaluate them only on the information that the group of students present. The following is a list of collaborative learning strategies that

are used in a broad instructional setting:

- 1.) Academic assistance programs- help students with essay writing, formatting a research paper, and test taking strategies. These sessions are conducted in a small group or in a one to one setting. These sessions help to develop student self-confidence and provide necessary support for these students to achieve academic success (Ooms, Fergy, Marks- Maran, Burke, Sheehe, 2013).
- 2.) Learning Library Resources (LRC) - offers extensive support and services for the college student. Many students agree that using the LRC assist them in completing assignments and research papers (Ooms, Fergy, Marks- Maran, Burke, Sheehe, 2013). The LRC instructor is able to help students to find resources to support the topic and issues they are writing about. This resource ultimately builds self-confidence in the non-traditional student.
- 3.) Classroom Discussion- is an important component of critical thinking; instructors must model effective academic discourse. Discussion that initiates deep thinking and analysis produces a solid understanding of the curriculum being taught. Instructors must clearly model and demonstrate ways to accurately discuss sophisticated concepts in a small group situation.

Innovative instruction that includes collaborative and cooperative learning strategies serve the motivational and academic needs of the non- traditional college student. Non- traditional students often react negatively to long lectures and independent work, which frequently results in reluctance to come to class. Non- traditional students tend to prosper when instructional interventions are creative, interactive, and "out of the box." Collaborative and cooperative small group learning provides fertile ground for higher order thinking and analysis to take place. Furthermore, it fosters increased student achievement, enhances classroom discussions and encourages new thoughts and ideas (Henessy and Evans, 2006).

Current Instructional Intervention Model for the Non- Traditional Student at Argosy University in Tampa, Florida

The current instructional intervention model for non-traditional student population at Argosy University utilizes a comprehensive approach to meeting the students' needs in and outside the classroom. The Argosy student services team looks at the academic profile of the total student and courses are assigned based on student readiness. Placement data is analyzed to identify academic strengths and weaknesses. Once student data has been reviewed, Student Services chooses classes that are appropriate for the specific developmental stage of the non- traditional student.

The student also has input as to which classes they would like to enroll in first.

Ongoing tracking of student progress is conducted by Student Services in conjunction with the program chair of the selected department of study. As the students are monitored for progress, recommendations are made for ancillary services that will support student success in academic achievement. When support services are suggested to assist a student with their academic endeavors, the student is urged to contact the particular support service provider. If the student does not follow up with the recommendation typically the program chair, student services, or the professor of the course the student is currently enrolled in will follow up on behalf of the student.

The academic assistance programs offered at Argosy University for the non- traditional student feature prescriptive individualized tutorial instruction to address the specific needs of the student. The academic assistance program is a tutorial model set up to provide intensive instructional remediation based on individual student needs. Tutorial instruction is offered in the areas of academic writing, mathematics and statistics, reference and research as well as study skills. Personnel assigned to provide instruction and interventions in the Academic Assistance program are professors in their field of study as well as certified educators.

The Academic Writing Assistance Program offers students instructional support in the grammar and mechanics of writing, proper American Psychological Association (APA) formatting, and support with setting up an outline for a specific research paper or essay. Students who are enrolled in the Undergraduate, Masters, and

A twenty-first century college learning environment must offer a contemporary approach to learning that values each student and celebrates their individualities as adult learners.

Doctoral Program are eligible to receive assistance with academic writing. Students bring samples of their written work or a rough draft for the professor to review, critique, and use as a starting point for instructional assistance. Tutorial support is flexible and prescriptive to meet the needs of the particular student at the time of assistance. The students at Argosy appreciate the individual attention they receive and exude self confidence as they move through their coursework, knowing a support system to help them with their academic writing and research papers exists.

Argosy University in Tampa offers a Mathematics Assistance Program for students in the Undergraduate

Program up through the Doctoral Level. The assistance focuses on current skills and strategies being taught in Algebra and Statistics courses. The instructor also works with students on how to navigate the SPSS software and interpret results. Students bring with them the current material they are working on and prescriptive instruction is provided for those areas. The instructor works with the students to show them multiple ways to solve the problems or manipulate the software. The assistance program has a flexible schedule so that students can make appointment times with the instructor that fits into their schedules. It is common for students to struggle with the statistics course and using various software, thus the students make repeat appointments with the instructor until the completion of the course they are enrolled in.

In addition, assistance is available in the areas of technology and locating scholarly reference sources to cite within research papers. The learning support specialist is accessible to support students with referencing, research, and technology related issues. The university also provides an onsite computer lab for currently enrolled students that need access to technology hardware. Support in the area of study skills is provided for students who are in need of help with developing better academic work habits and organizational skills.

Conclusion

Non- traditional students are a dramatically growing segment of the post- secondary school population. Data reveals that this pattern will continue into the near future. As a college education becomes accessible to a more diverse student population, learning interventions and strategies must be in place to support this new segment

of adult learners (Cavotie, Kopera- Frye, 2007). Innovative programs, such as the Academic Writing Assistance Program, Mathematics Assistance Program, study skills support, reference and research Assistance as well as technological support, help the non- traditional student meet success at the university level. These programs provide academic and emotional support for students who would normally struggle in a traditional college learning environment (Forbus, Newbold, Metha, 2011). Interactive classrooms that provide appropriate motivation and instruction, which is on based on real- world experiences, offer the non- traditional student an avenue to apply prior knowledge while learning new information and concepts (Strage, 2008). A twenty-first century college learning environment must offer a contemporary approach to learning that values each student and celebrates their individualities as adult learners.

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Dr. Dominick Ferello holds a doctorate degree in Education with an emphasis on curriculum development from Argosy University, Tampa, Florida. He also possesses a Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. In addition, Dr. Ferello has a Master of Science Degree in Reading and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education from Dowling College, Oakdale, New York. He also holds professional state certification in New York and Florida in the areas of School Administration, Reading, Elementary Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

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On a personal note, Dr. Sterner enjoys spending time with her family. She has three beautiful daughters and a wonderful boyfriend. She is also expecting her first granddaughter soon and her middle daughter will be graduating high school and starting college. Her youngest daughter will be starting Kindergarten soon. In her spare time she loves to read and enjoy the outdoors.

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Hybrid and Blended Learning for Health Career Students

By Dr. Wendy Flint

The Department of Labor has predicted an increase of 2.5 million healthcare workers by the year 2020. The primary reasons are twofold – an aging population that is living longer; and 100 million baby boomers with increasing health care needs. Approximately 10 million baby boomers a year are turning 60-years old – a magic age for increased preventative medical procedures paid by insurance companies. Add to those statistics, millions of citizens coming into the healthcare system under Affordable Healthcare (5 million in California alone) and thousands of baby boomer doctors and nurses retiring leaving a gap.

What is the answer to meet the job demand? We need accelerated and effective education, especially for the largest population of workers - the entry level healthcare workforce. The education and training of entry level health care providers (medical assistant, sleep technicians, pharmacy technicians, home health aides, EKG technicians, to name a few) range from a six month certificate to a two year associates degree. After a long recession (2008 – 2013), people need jobs and health careers offer secure jobs now and in the future.

The largest groups of enrollees in these programs are generation “Y” – also referred to as the “Millenniums.” This generation is our future workforce in health care. Who are the Gen Y’s? According to USA Today they are the more than 70 million Americans born 1977 to 2002.

We need accelerated and effective education, especially for the largest population of workers—the entry level healthcare workforce.

“Under the narrow definition, as they take their first jobs, Gen Y would be the fastest-growing segment of the workforce – growing from 14% of the workforce to 21% to nearly 32 million workers (Retrieved on 12/2/2013 at http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/money/workplace/2005-11-06-gen-y_x.htm).”

Gen Y’s are part of the “native technology generation” (born into technology) and they prefer accelerated hybrid education programs to degree programs. Their ability to master blended and hybrid programs is phenomenal. Most

students from this generation are carrying in their pockets more powerful computing devices than the vast majority of computers in our underfunded schools (Bergmann and Sams, 2012, p. 20).” By definition, blended learning is where a percentage of learning is through computer technology (online) in the formal classroom or school computer lab during specified school hours. Hybrid learning is where a percentage of learning is online outside of the classroom and the hours of learning are self-directed and self-paced.

The baby boomer generation may fear the short amount of training their phlebotomist, pharmacy technician, or medical assistant may have received. However, their fears would be unfounded if they understood learner-centered concepts of education where students do not advance without demonstrating the competencies in their labs or externships. The hybrid and blended courses actually increases transfer of learning and knowledge retention because learners have more time to practice and engage with their instructors. Transfer of learning takes place when existing knowledge, abilities and skills assist learners in the performance of new tasks or in the next step of the learning process (Flint, 2007). Brain-based research also significantly supports hybrid learning. There is evidence that multi-media presentations increases the transfer of short term memory, now referred to as “working memory,” in the front of the brain to long term memory deeper in

the brain thus preventing skill or knowledge decay (Schweppe and Rummer, 2014).

Healthcare training companies, career technical schools, and community colleges have opted for an online program that includes guided content, videos, and quizzes to teach theory and classroom time for labs. In some schools, the instructor records lectures and posts the videos for students to review before coming to class. This instructional method is called “flipping the classroom.” Like hybrid and blended learning, it allows the instructor to have more one-on-one lab time with the students, check off competencies, or to facilitate collaborative learning.

In a flipped or hybrid healthcare classroom, learners

come to class to participate in an inquiry discussion based on the recorded lecture. The instructor then uses the class time to practice medical procedures. The classroom experience is problem-based learning at its best. Problem-based learning is a self-directed and constructive process, in which social context, discover, and experience lead to new knowledge and skills (Lohman, 2002). In healthcare training and education, problem-based learning prepares learners for situations they will face in their workplace. When courses include 3 to 4 week externship (without instructor oversight) or internship (with instructor oversight) at a medical facility, the healthcare student is ready for employment. Problem-based learning fits well into intensive formats because it is characterized by the use of real-life problems as a way for adult learners to learn critical thinking, collaboration, and the essential concepts and professional skills of a particular discipline (Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 2010).

An allied health vocational school in California offered 8 to 9 month courses (plus a one month externship) for 20 years (1991 – 2010) with great success. The marketing proclaimed, “Become employed in less than a year.”

Today, advertising for the same training programs states, “Be prepared for a health career in less than 6 months!”

This became possible with hybrid courses. The complete re-design of all the curriculum was a major endeavor with fifteen course offerings. The transition to hybrid courses in 2011, met with much instructor resistance and concern over the student’s mastery of the medical concepts. To address the concerns, over 250 instructors were trained in a 12-hour adult learning theory course that included learner-centered concepts, problem-based learning, and online instruction management. The instructors also received mentoring and coaching until they were comfortable with the new hybrid course design and in online learning system management.

Whereas instructors get less pay for fewer hours in hybrid course designs, they are able to teach more courses and the school is able to graduate more students per year in a high job-demand industry. These instructors are not flipping the classroom yet with pre-recording lectures, but they are in ongoing communication with students by email, in a discussion thread, or through live webinars. In a blended learning model, they often show YouTube videos in class where medical procedures are demonstrated.

There is evidence that accelerated programs are successful with nontraditional learners and can be offered at lower costs than conventional programs. A majority of students that enroll in allied health entry-level career programs are women with lower family income and whose race and ethnicity are underrepresented in four-year colleges. The underemployed and the unemployed want to get affordable certificate training, graduate with skills in a short amount of time, and get a job. Hybrid programs meet the need. After they are working in the healthcare industry,

many continue their education in degree programs as they see advancement opportunities in the field.

Critics may think this is a “big business” shortcut to educating healthcare workers, but in truth the need to create hybrid and blended actually forced the hand of schools and educators toward learner-centered concepts that engage students, increase practical application opportunities, and provide time to assist students to ensure quality control of medical procedures.

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Dr. Wendy Flint has a PhD in Education with a specialization in Teaching and Learning and has twenty-five years’ experience in public and private education. She is a former tenured faculty member and a distance learning instructor for university programs. Dr. Flint is a Board Member and Chief Learning Officer for The Learning Oasis, a non-profit allied health training organization in California and is employed as a College and University Account Manager at Augusoft, a lifelong learning SAAS cloud-based enrollment company.

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Philosophical Media Literacy: A Bridge Between Philosophy and the Information Environment

By John Patrick Cleary
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Operational Definitions:

Philosophy for Children

Converting existing traditional face-to-face courses into their online equivalents quite often results in several important components gone amiss according to the control theory metaphor of eLearning system design. To ensure learner success in courses sans active regulators, redesign of the learning system in its entirety, reclaiming those missing components, or at least instructor intervention may be necessary. This article touches upon the absence of regulators in current online course design and delivery of many courses and discusses strategies of cultivating essential self-regulatory skills to ensure that future learner success in such courses is not held captive of the past

Media Studies

Media Studies (MS) is the academic study of the content of the media and its role in influencing social, political, economic and cultural constructions of reality.

Critical Media Literacy

Critical Media Literacy (CML) acknowledges the concerns of media studies, while also providing and provoking new ways for individuals to respond to media. CML focuses on the agency of the audience to elucidate what implications this practice has for teaching, learning and curricula.

Philosophical Media Literacy

Philosophical Media Literacy (PML) assumes that the information/environment is rich with philosophical complexity. It is a teaching strategy that seeks to deconstruct arguments inherent in media images and narratives to interrogate what is presented as representation, reality and truth. PML seeks to promote philosophical analysis and debate by questioning media content and reflecting on its meaning.

The construction of a society in the operation of which its members fully participate is critical to the proper functioning of a democracy. As citizens turn increasingly to electronic sources of learning and communication, it becomes even more essential that they learn to critically evaluate the flow of information to which they are continually exposed, and to understand its influence on accepted and dominant ways of thinking about the world.

As the information environment has influenced greater control over how people think and behave, it has become increasingly apparent that traditional outlets of knowledge, such as books, are becoming gradually subordinate (as a source of knowledge) to the speed at which descriptions/ explanations can be referenced on a computer. This staggering change in habits of study (and enjoyment) has brought new focus on media and its role in the formation of values and life in general. It is for this reason that media scholars assume the world outside the classroom is a type of curriculum; wherever images are at the center of one's interpretation of anything, it becomes clear that the task of the student and teacher is to question what is presented as reality and truth (Postman, 1985). Such is the project of Media Studies (MS) and Critical Media Literacy (CML) education: to challenge the power of the media while also recognizing the role people can play in its transformation. When students respond to media, it allows them to see how thinking critically about it is a way to understand its influence on them. That is why I want to argue that Philosophy for Children's (P4C) Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CPI) as a strategy for improving reasoning skills matches up very well with the content of MS and CML's commitment to ideological unveiling.

The Split between Media Studies and Critical Media Literacy

The apparent gap that exists between Media Studies (MS) and Critical Media Literacy (CML) is largely the result of assumptions that both camps make about the effects of media on those who use it. MS is often placed in the argument framework of predatory culture where "identity is fashioned mainly and often violently around

the excesses of marketing and consumption and the natural social relations of post-industrial capitalism” (McLaren, 1995 p.2). For example, Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) argue that many younger students are manipulated and controlled by corporate forces whose primary aim is to create child-consumers. CML, on the other hand, recognizes that students have greater control over what they see, hear, and explain. As MS and CML have their respective practices, this has created a gap in media literacy in general.

MS has been developed by organizations such as the Action Coalition for Media Education (ACME) which seeks to promote social justice, democracy in education, violence prevention, and anti-consumerism. Some of its major progenitors and spokespersons include Noam Chomsky, Douglas Kellner and Bill Moyers. In contrast, those who advocate CML come out of the tradition of the Birmingham Group and the National Association of Media Literacy Education (NAMLE), whose central commitment is “to develop the habits of inquiry and skills of expression needed by critical thinkers, effective communicators, and active citizens in today’s world” (National Association for Media Literacy Education). This organization includes scholars such as James Gee and Angela Thomas.

Since this gap is fairly pronounced, and one group often claims a view of the media that is exclusive of the other, some critical educators have conducted their scholarship in both camps, which often confuses the aim of their inquiry. However, it should be noted that although there are differences between MS and CML, both lend themselves to philosophical thinking as the aim of both discourses is to disclose ideology. If the objective of ideological critique is to “unveil” distortions of facts, I want to argue that this is also in line with the basic tenets of epistemology: to question the ways in which “facts” are used as a criteria for truth. Just as philosophy is concerned with the interpretation and criteria of truth, MS and CML also focus on the “great conversation” in that they both interrogate how “knowledge is passed down from one thinker to another as it is modified, refined and corrected” (Postman, 1995 p.124). Hence the framework of their inquiry is grounded in a type of philosophical requirement to question “inherited truths,” and to probe contemporary formulations of what is presented as authentic and factual.

Accordingly, the curricular approach of philosophy for children—the identification and problematization of common, central, and contestable concepts—and P4C’s pedagogical method—community of philosophical inquiry (CPI) may assist in clarifying the teaching goals of MS and CML. Thus, a heretofore absent part of P4C curriculum and practice is: the evaluation of media culture and the role students play in the interpretation of these discourses. By focusing on the ways in which the media life-worlds of students, or their visual culture (Mirzoeff,

1999), teachers can connect the philosophical problems that P4C interrogates through its curriculum and practice. This connection offers the promise of a new form of literacy through a utilization of two disparate curricula into community of inquiry methodology, which is based on critical group deliberation, guided by a trained facilitator.

While Luke (2006) and others emphasize the importance of media studies broadly for understanding student identity, media can also be understood on a philosophical level, by which I mean the identification and problematization of common, central and contestable concepts (CCC) such as truth, identity, culture, success, beauty, violence, justice, power, and so on, and their reconstruction through a group dialogical context. By identifying the central themes, beliefs, and assumptions in relation to those concepts that are carried and communicated in mainstream media narratives, images, and performances of subjectivity, students may develop a form of “philosophical literacy” that will allow them to reposition themselves as autonomous subjects in relation to their influence.

Analysis of the impact of media images on students has been divided into two camps: one focusing largely on encoded messages, (MS), and one focusing on the agency of the audience, (CML), to decode media messages. Both of these discourses have important educational implications. My assumption is that while a synthesis of the two camps is necessary, it is not sufficient for defining a classroom practice. Instead, what is missing in media literacy is an in-depth analysis of the philosophical content inherent in, for example, television commercials. Thus, for this reason I want to ask:

To what extent can the curriculum of Media Literacy and Critical Media Literacy be enhanced through the curricular approach—the identification and exploration of philosophical concepts—and the teaching methodology—community of philosophical inquiry—of philosophy for children? And, what pedagogical challenges may arise as part of this enrichment, and how might they be addressed? And finally, does the enhancement of critical media literacy through philosophy for children’s CPI lead to deeper philosophical reflection? By “enhanced” I mean a type of improved and enriched line of philosophical inquiry that goes beyond decoding (CML) to the investigation of motivating causes and fundamental beliefs that may underlie images of reality.

I have termed that putative enhancement Philosophical Media Literacy (PML), and understand it as pedagogy and a curriculum that has the potential of bridging the gap between teaching, thinking philosophically, and the information environment. PML takes up where critical media literacy leaves off by asking deeper philosophical questions about the form and content of media images and the beliefs and assumptions they promulgate. It seeks to

interrogate messages, codes and themes that are explicit or implicit, philosophically, in images. For example, if a commercial illustrated for a viewer an encoded message of a particular view of what happiness is, PML would add to this by asking: what is happiness? Or if the commercial presents a view of patriotism through powerful images, PML's project pushes it further: what is patriotism? As such PML, as a synthesis of Critical Media Literacy and philosophy for children methodology, offers the possibility of bridging the gap between philosophy and the wider information environment.

Images can control the way people think, act and feel. This is why it is important to study the effects of what people watch in the information environment, and what follows from an examination of the themes that arise from those effects (within a classroom) are appropriate to the PML project. My particular interest is in the way children interpret and react to commercials that influence their construction of common, central and contestable (CCC) concepts that are operative in their daily lives (e.g. identity construction, happiness, propaganda, power). Gregory (2008) describes these concepts as

- Central to our lives, rather than trivial.
- Common to most people's experience; ordinary rather than esoteric.
- Contestable, or puzzling; not easy to agree on or settle once and for all. (p.2)

Just as some studies have investigated traditional relationships between television and violence in schools (Anderson, 2003), future studies ought to concentrate on the interpretations students had of specific television commercials and, in turn, how this might have led to philosophical reflection. This is informed by the assumption that one way of awakening students to the role of media images (in shaping the construction of the CCC concepts that guide their attitudes and behaviors) is through the methodology of philosophy for children (P4C), known as community of philosophical inquiry (CPI). I want to argue for the possibility of two levels of dialogue: that there is a relationship between philosophical reasoning and CML which may bring about a proposed realm of PML. Students can certainly interpret commercials, but may also be engaged in philosophy as in critical media viewing and dialogue. When both the form of P4C and the CPI reaches a level of inquiry that goes beyond thinking at one level to thinking of what those messages and themes mean philosophically (e.g. what do you mean by stereotype?), it approaches something new in the form of PML.

Philosophy for Children

The origin of P4C is traceable to various philosophers concerned with bringing democratic teaching practices into the classroom. Just as Socrates attempted, through dialogue, to interrogate dominant views and traditions

within the agora, P4C contributes to the project of re-inventing the student-teacher relationship and the role of power in the classroom. Matthew Lipman (1991, 1993, 1988), Gareth Matthews (1980, 1994) and Anne Sharp (1993, 1997) have drawn much of their inspiration from the writings of Charles Sanders Peirce (1945), who was the catalyst of the term community of inquiry in his *Collected Papers* (1931/1958) and John Dewey (1938/1997). From its inception, Lipman and Sharp (1978, 1980) have sought to re-construct philosophy and, thereby, the teaching of philosophy so that it is accessible to children. P4C's teaching methodology and curriculum assumes children can think philosophically without the aid of formal instruction in the history of philosophy. P4C's central claim of improving a child's understanding of the world is not schooling for learning, but *education for thinking*. As Lipman (1993) argues, "student inquirers assume some portion of the responsibility for their own education. They learn to follow the lines of inquiry they initiate, and this leads them to learn to think for themselves" (p.682).

The Intervention of P4C

P4C is often termed as a thinking skills program for children (Cam, 1995; Wilks, 1995) or a specific course in critical and creative thinking. Advocates of P4C refer to the program more as a teaching strategy that enables students to build on their own curiosity about the world and the ideas that interest them the most (Splitter, 1988). Cam argues that the subject matter for P4C is the common, central, yet contestable concepts that support a person's experience and an academic discipline. As stated earlier, the discourse model used in P4C is community of philosophical inquiry (CPI), meaning an environment in which students work together to generate and answer their own questions about the philosophical issues that are found in written material. Wilks refers to the thinking in the community of philosophical inquiry as not only critical and creative, but also as collaborative. These aims are achieved in P4C by giving students an opportunity to think for themselves about ideas and concepts that have been selected by them for study because they have found these concepts interesting and worthwhile pursuing (Cam, 1995; Wilks, 1995).

The original emphasis in P4C was on dialogue and narrative; as such, Lipman's novels address meaningful philosophical problems in works such as *Lisa, Mark, Pixie, Kio and Gus*, and *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*. However, P4C has not traditionally addressed visual narratives in the manner that MS and CML attempt to do; it has not taken the "pictorial turn" (Mitchell, 1994).

Therefore, when children engage in critical interpretations of media images they create the possibility of bringing about practices that encourage democratic, non-authoritarian approaches to learning about themselves and the world (Hagood, 2007). Accordingly, this kind of

internal transformation may work with P4C's dedication to sustained dialogical inquiry and its willingness to address the issues and concerns of young people (through CPI) and youth culture's spontaneous, image-driven theatre of media. Furthermore, P4C's discursive and de-centered emphasis on distributive intelligence democratizes the teaching and learning environment so that it can readily examine the media world as a text. For example, this type of analysis may include discussions (as MS and CML also purport to do) about television, feature films, print media and the internet as fertile ground for the discussion of values (inherent in philosophical arguments) and what influence they have in shaping opinion. By having a relationship between CML and philosophical reasoning, the community of philosophical inquiry (philosophical thinking) could help people think more critically about commercials and, hence, engage them more deeply in philosophical reflection about the information environment.

Community of Philosophical Inquiry

CPI as the discourse model of P4C methodology allows for students to participate in a kind of democratic pedagogy unknown to most classroom practice (Hagaman, 1990). During a P4C session, students share, cooperate, and participate in a learning environment that is nonhierarchical, inclusive, and nurturing (Corrington, 1987). Similar to the Harkness method (Tingley, 2002), which encourages round table discussion in particular subject areas, P4C's teaching methodology encourages learning as a process, not as a practice that has any sort of a predetermined end (Lipman et al., 1991).

Many educators have argued for the importance of inquiry within the classroom as a way to cultivate the intellectual growth and reasoning skills of students. By focusing on inquiry, teachers learn *with* their students instead of merely conveying information. When this happens, students learn to value their own thinking as equal to the teacher's. Postman (1969) suggests that the inquiry method provides a new and transformative experience for students and teachers:

It is entirely possible that the inquiry method will help students to produce answers their teachers crave, and remember them longer, and utter them faster. But in anticipating this, you are imagining the most inconsequential part of the story. The inquiry method is not designed to do better what older environments try to do. It works you over in entirely different ways. It activates different senses, attitudes, and perceptions; it generates a different, bolder, and more potent kind of intelligence. (p. 27)

Similarly, CPI, in its democratic approach to teaching, emphasizes dialogue as a way to bring about better thinking (Lipman, 1991; Lipman & Sharp, 1978; Pritchard, 1996; Sprod, 2001). Ideally, dialogue enables students to

share observations, insights, clarifications and problems cooperatively, so that each participant learns how to listen as well as how to speak empathetically (Lipman, 1993; Schertz, 2004). In this setting the facilitator's (ordinarily the class discussion leader-teacher) role is to nurture inquiry through a "position of ignorance" to allow for the possibility of "following the inquiry where it leads" and to bridge constructions of meaning that emerge from the questions the community produces (Kennedy, 2004, p. 1). As such, CPI does not follow a stationary model of teaching and learning; non-verbal and atmospheric elements that pervade group identity are often guided or shaped by the delicate and often un-spoken manner in which participants communicate with each other. Each participant "is involved in a developmental process of change in which every member is determinative in some way of the group as a whole, yet the whole has an emergent character that transcends any one individual" (Kennedy, 1994, p.2). While in a traditional classroom the aim of the teacher is the transmission of information, CPI treats knowledge and information as something that is created or discovered by group inquiry, and the student is therefore fully engaged with the inquiry of others as well as with the teacher. This benefits both students and teachers, in that it allows for the possibility of teaching and learning from each other (Nowell, 1992; Sharp, 1987, 1993).

Community of Philosophical Inquiry and Central, Common, and Contestable Issues

As described earlier, community of philosophical inquiry is a nonhierarchical teaching and learning model that strives to democratize how students and teachers learn from curricula and each other. As inquiry is its central focus, its teaching methodology is grounded in process. Participants vote on questions they produce and each participant shares in the facilitation of the discussions in which the inquiry builds on the contributions of the community. CPI theoreticians and practitioners assume that communal dialogue cultivates a form of distributive intelligence that enables people to self-correct and transform in ways that traditional teaching falls short of. By sharing and working communally students can "do" philosophy as a means of learning to think philosophically. As the CPI progresses through topics and issues, the ways in which people reason are hopefully improved. For example, as reasoning ability is at the center of CPI, it eschews relativism or the common notion that "everyone's opinion is a good as another's." Indeed, through its special consistency in asking for clarity in all situations, CPI as a teaching and learning tool requires that one's skills at listening well and verbal coherency be sharpened for communal scrutiny. This is where it can be particularly useful for PML; it will offer the opportunity for students to construct philosophical responses (analytic/existential/ethical) about media images within the comfort of a

supportive group of inquirers, but also with a conscious, focused, logical and argumentative rigor.

When common, central and contestable concepts are addressed through CPI, there is a greater possibility of creating transformative learning experiences. As thinking is cognitive, social and personal, students can be helped beyond the deceptive security of their own experiences by engaging in ethical inquiry in the classroom (Burgh, Field, Freakley, 2006). One advantage of CPI, as Splitter and Sharp (1995) explicate, is the improvement of thinking beyond conditioned, stereotypic responses, and the formation of meaningful reactions to the real world; CCC issues such as friendship, sexuality, peace, violence, and issues of life and death can be connected to problems in the local, regional and global community. When this happens, as Splitter (1993) highlights, “Philosophy for Children drives a wedge between indoctrination and moral abdication because it encourages children to reflect upon the beliefs and attitudes that they do have, within the environment of a community of philosophical inquiry” (p.392).

The epistemological claim of CPI is that communal philosophical dialogue, led by a philosophically trained facilitator, acts to problematize, deconstruct and reconstruct our personal and collective understanding of those common, central and contestable concepts that are basic to our understanding of interactions with the world. Further, it does so through the distributive, dialectical thinking that is characteristic of dialogical discourse (Kennedy, 2004). Because CPI as a discourse model is a “zone of proximal development,” children in such a situation are capable, with the coaching and modeling of a skilled facilitator, of moving between the abstract and the concrete—that is, making propositions and modifying them through raising examples and counterexamples—just as adults do (Kennedy, 1999). Students could be encouraged to identify and interrogate CCC’s concepts relevant to the world of media, by engaging them in a process of communal deliberative inquiry with the goal of generating new meanings relative to those concepts. This kind of normative ideal of deliberation can be described, as Gregory (2008) posits, as an “arc of inquiry.”

Philosophical inquiry in P4C has a trajectory in the shape of an arc, beginning with some kind of problem or opportunity which gives rise to some form of the general philosophical question: What is the most reasonable thing to believe or to value or to do in this case? and which ends in some kind of satisfactory resolution or fulfillment in the nature of a judgment. (p.21)

In a successful CPI, participants bring their implicit assumptions and experiences, and their current

constructs of CCC concepts to the discussion and find them under interrogation through exposure to the multiple perspectives within the group (Sharp, 1987). For example, when we encounter issues such as happiness, propaganda, or stereotypes within such a multi-perspectival context, we may find that our concepts may no longer fit smoothly into our life experience; they are “problematized.” It therefore becomes necessary to reconstruct what we think we know and mean, a process that operates through generalization, exemplification, identification and testing of assumptions and the consideration of counterexamples, all in the service of a search for new definitions that can be worked into more adequate propositions and descriptions. This process is one of unpacking what we mean, and making ourselves understood to all in the community, not just to some who may understand academic vocabulary. And as the community of interpreters progresses through re-organization, assimilation and accommodation of arguments and counterarguments, clarity, insight and tolerance of uncertainty become part of the cognitive trajectory of a collective and individual quest for understanding and self- knowledge. The ensuing transformation occurs both on the cognitive and the metacognitive level. Additionally, in the case of the inquiries represented by critical media literacy, the emergence of a new literacy forms a philosophical awareness of the issues surrounding media and the information environment. I now turn to what I describe as the utilization of P4C’s teaching methodology, CPI, with the content of CML, to bring about philosophical media literacy (PML).

Philosophical Media Literacy

Philosophical questions address assumptions that underlie truth claims and how the structure of an argument reflects those assumptions. In addition, they address what forms of reasoning processes (e.g. types of inferences—inductive or deductive) that have been employed to arrive at particular conclusions. What is distinct about a philosophical question is that it addresses not only content, as CML clearly achieves, but also the foundation for truth and the process (reasoning skills) by which one has arrived at that truth. PML, as a form of philosophy for children’s CPI and critical media literacy content seeks to promote deep inquiry about media images through communal philosophical reflection on the common, central and contestable concepts that inform our encounter with the information environment as it is currently constructed. What is unique about PML as a teaching strategy is that it places equal emphasis not only on revealing concealed

and ideologically distorted messages, but also on analytic, ethical, and existential questioning (philosophical inquiry) that asks students to construct new meanings that might not simply be “buried” within texts. This is where P4C’s teaching methodology with its commitment to philosophical reasoning can demonstrate how critical media literacy can be enriched to provide a new approach to media studies in general.

Because CML addresses the difficulties of the information world and the lives of students, and CPI is dedicated to strengthening one’s analytical skills, taken together they may lend themselves to an inquiry-based instructional model to help students ask questions about what they watch, see, and read. As such, as students access, evaluate, and analyze media images, with the help of philosophical inquiry and CML, they gain a greater awareness of how the forces of manipulation and power are wrapped into both the content and the style of contemporary media (Kellner & Share, 2007). That is, through a combination of content, (CML), and thinking philosophically, (CPI), they can better understand how to arm themselves with a critical consciousness to reach across historical and contemporary contexts.

As a discursive practice that uses philosophical analysis to media content, PML is not a methodology or curriculum with a specific outline of what or how students should be engaged with philosophy and media—it may *not* require any special intervention on the part of the facilitator. My assumption is that by analyzing the information environment in a community of philosophical inquiry, an improvement in critical media literacy (awareness)—by way of philosophical thinking by the community of students—can surface more or less effortlessly. PML could surface more or less spontaneously from discussions without direct assistance and, specifically, from the questions asked during the dialogue. The criteria for identifying a discussion as philosophical are the use of skill sets associated with critical thinking that arise from students’ interpretations of the form and content of what they watch.

In combining and integrating the best qualities of different fields of inquiry, PML offers the possibility of a philosophical practice with children and youth within the framework of critical and cultural studies. PML creates a discursive context in which students and teachers can work together to uncover and explore—through the heuristic of philosophical inquiry—the powerful role of the information environment (e.g. advertising) in shaping identity and opinion.

Future studies could allow for the possibility of integrating other teaching strategies to connect media sources (such as feature films, the internet, and various other digital environments) with community of philosophical inquiry to allow students think

philosophically about their complex visual life worlds. Such projects, while also committed to the traditional aims of CML, could also benefit from the methodology of CPI in that it will allow for communal discussion of philosophically investigative questions such as:

1. How has the new “intimacy” of instant messaging in cell phone use created perceptual shifts in the ways we communicate with each other as autonomous subjects and as members of a group? (Epistemology and ethics).
2. How have *Twitter*, *Facebook* and other social networking sites facilitated political consensus so that regime change is made possible? (Political and social philosophy).
3. How do feature films work to normalize violence—especially violence directed at women—and what does this say about our values and how we treat each other? (Ethics).
4. What are the philosophical implications of the increasing use of television programs and advertising in the teaching and learning environments of public schools? (Ethics).

Implications for Further Study

Philosophical media literacy, as a new way of bringing together different discourses, challenges the assumption that subjects be taught in isolation. Its potential effectiveness in re-invigorating inter-disciplinary curricula so that philosophical inquiry is at the center of teaching and learning is promising and exciting. As more and more programs call for new ways of instrumentalizing teaching and learning, philosophical media literacy’s intervention would re-direct teachers to emphasize philosophical reflection—just as philosophy for children clearly attempts to do with its methodology. Nevertheless, there is an important difference here; whereas philosophy for children is limited to teaching with novels, and media studies and critical media literacy are dedicated to ideological unveiling, philosophical media literacy takes the turn to philosophically interrogating *all* aspects of the information environment as its locus of inquiry. The implications for this kind of shift in education could be far reaching; the role of traditional methods of teaching and the limits and boundaries of traditional curricula will need to be re-examined. For example, instead of a reliance on facts in subject matter, a new emphasis could be placed, first, on questions such as “how do we know that facts are really facts? That is, just what is a “fact?” Future scholarship in PML could investigate the ways in which philosophical reflection can play a role across all disciplines so that students and teachers, and all people, can have a greater role in understanding themselves and the world in which they live.

As there are few existing studies on the connection between CPI and media studies/literacy, experimentation with PML may serve as the foundation for later empirical studies and an emerging curriculum. It might be true, for example, that traditional problems in ethics, epistemology or aesthetics bear close resemblance to the dramatization of these subjects in venues other than television. A continuation of the discussion of visual media images in terms of their philosophical content may generate rich data, and should lead to the development of more formalized curriculum in the emergent field of philosophical media literacy, and in its application to the already established field of critical media literacy. The value of this kind of practice is in its potential to show how teachers might connect curricula to their students' life worlds, thereby bridging spaces between the world of ideas, the information environment, and students' existential questions.

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