

SWAP SESSION NEWSLETTER

None of us is as smart as all of us. -Roy Disney

SWAP SESSION: The Course Portfolio and Its Role in the Peer Review Process.

Dr. Daniel Bernstein, Professor of Psychology
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Psychology

No. 26

Swap Session held: 9-20-01

Sponsored by the Faculty Exchange for Teaching Excellence,
Dr. Judy Provo-Klimek

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What If....

“What if you completed hours of research, meticulously recorded the data, and then just discarded it at the end of the project?”

This may sound absurd, but when you teach a class, record the results, and stop there. That is often what takes place.

Dr. Bernstein challenges you to take the extra step. Communicate what you have done with peers and reflect upon it incorporating any helpful feedback into a portfolio.

Initiating the Peer Review Process

1. Define *Goals*

Provide peer with course syllabus, and include short memorandum explaining what you included and why.

Acknowledge peer's comments.

2. Describe *Instructional Designs*

Share your instructional design, and comment on why you chose these methods (lecture, lab, computer homework, group assignments, etc).

Acknowledge peer's opinions.

3. Exchange *Work On Student Performance*

Provide examples of student work. Demonstrate the distribution of student achievement, and focus on whether the students are showing a deep understanding of the content.

Acknowledge peer feedback and integrate the 3 pieces of information.

Incorporating Feedback and Analyzing Findings

1. Was I successful in what I was trying to accomplish?
2. Did I achieve the goals that I had stated in the first memo when I looked at student work? If not what do I need to do different?
3. Engage a local audience.
 - Take to faculty and ask them to read it.
 - Put it on line and request comments
4. Refine document through feedback.

Developing Objectives

Develop questions about your teaching that you would like to inquire more about, and state them in the course portfolio.

Dr. Bernstein's questions for his portfolio were:

1. Are my students showing a deep understanding in my field?
2. Can I use technology to improve their performance in some ways?
3. How can more of them succeed?
4. How can I get them to retain the information beyond the two- week marker?

Possible Uses of a Course Portfolio

- **The Course Portfolio is an ideal vehicle to document inquiry.**
 - * Portfolio has hallmarks of scholarly work
 - * Presents clear goals, articulated methods, visible results, and reflection on effective practice.
 - * Show what you have done in the way of inquiry
- **Serves improvement and accountability**
 - * Useful for planning and tracking improvements in learning
 - * Between periods of accountability it serves to guide scholarly inquiry
- **Opportunity for new audience**
 - * Project contacts of peers at other institutions
 - * Private exchange with other teachers
- **Role of community exchange**
 - * Connects to contentious “scholarship” issues
 - * Others can build their own practice from it
 - * Can be reviewed for quality by arm’s length observers
- **Compliment to student voice**
 - * Represents additional aspects of teaching
 - * Takes the spotlight off of the teacher as a performer
- **Lessons learned from the project:**
 - * Need plan to provide occasions for writing
 - * Writing smaller pieces with peers is easier
 - * Process must provide useful interactions for teachers to sustain their interests

To view examples of course portfolios for a variety of classes at a variety of universities, go to this web site:

www.unl.edu/peerrev/

Select the Participants Area.

This web site includes portfolios from K-State faculty participating in a Peer Consultation (Review) project designed to enhance instructional practices, facilitate student learning, and generate evidence of student learning.

If you are interested in participating or have questions about the Peer Consultation project, you are encouraged to contact one of the K-state campus leaders:

Stephen W. Kiefer (swkiefer@ksu.edu)

Betsy Cauble (betsyc@ksu.edu)

Upcoming Events!

- Charles Glassick
"Scholarship Reconsidered and Assessed"
October 25, 2001
3:30 in the Big 12 Room,
Kansas State Union
- Dr. Pete Bill DVM, Ph.D.
"How to Give Effective Large Lectures"
Day and time to be announced

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