

Curriculum Innovation Communities

Practical Applications

Writing Across Curry College

- Tie writing assignments to reading/s.
- Make role of writing clear in syllabus and course objectives.
- Provide clear and high expectations, in the form of grading rubrics or model/sample papers.
- Provide frequent low-stakes writing opportunities, such as minute-papers, BlackBoard discussion boards, and/or reading-response questions.
- For high stakes assignments, require drafts and/or outlines.
- Offer frequent and varied feedback opportunities.

Quantitative Reasoning

- Lectures & Discussions
 - ✓ Use numerical information to provide context
 - ✓ Explain their meanings and discuss implications
- Written work
 - ✓ Require quantitative information, such as charts, tables, or demographics
 - ✓ Grade for coherent use of numbers in sentences
- Academic Support
 - ✓ Explain rubrics and grading schemes
 - ✓ Effective time management
- Student Activities
 - ✓ Budget proposals, event planning

Inclusion

- Inclusion is more than just narrowly defined 'diversity' (race, ethnicity, etc.). Thinking beyond the content and considering the entire space, makes the classroom a more equitable place for learning.
- Identity matters in all learning. Both the identity of your students and your own identity impact the classroom. Exploring, recognizing, and celebrating such difference requires a more explicit model of teaching pedagogy that allows students to reach shared outcomes.
- Inclusion requires reflecting on your teaching pedagogy and making your learning goals explicit (to you and your students). Explicitly understanding your learning outcomes allows you to better reflect on your desires for your students and how they can accomplish them.
- Many of us already incorporate methods of inclusive teaching without realizing it. Given that inclusion is also about delivery, many of us already make attempts at inclusive pedagogy through the use of Blackboard, PowerPoint, discussion etc. Ask yourself about the ways you incorporate inclusive teaching practice and how effective it might be.

Writing Across Curry College - Writing Enhanced ("WE") Courses

Pursuant to Curry College's Writing Across the Curriculum program, we propose that courses listed as Writing Enhanced ("WE") will have:

- A. Integration of Reading and Writing
- B. Multiple types of writing, including both high stakes and low stakes, integrated into course content and connected to learning outcomes for the course.
 - 1 High stakes writing is defined as revised, polished, and graded.
 - 2 Low stakes writing is defined as informal, ungraded writing, including (but not limited to) journal entries, Blackboard commentary, and in-class writing. (Writing may be graded for content not for writing quality.)
- C. Multiple opportunities for writing feedback points during the course, including feedback on preliminary versions of assignments.
- D. A minimum of 15 pages of writing, more for upper level or capstone courses (i.e. 20 pages).
- E. Specific instruction in writing, for example, disciplinary conventions, will be integrated into the course.
- F. Research and information literacy integrated appropriately to the discipline and level to support writing goals.

Writing may take the form of Non-Disciplinary and/or Disciplinary writing.

Examples of Non-Disciplinary writing include (but are not limited to):

- Journal entries
- Editorial writing
- Response to reading/book review
- Outlining assignments
- Principles of using sources and citations

Examples of Disciplinary writing include (but are not limited to):

- Writing using Discipline-specific concepts, vocabulary, style, and format
- Lab reports
- Historical analysis
- Data analysis
- Aesthetic analysis (art, music, literature)
- Case studies
- Literary explication
- Discipline-specific use of sources and documentation

Quantitative Reasoning – Embedding Quantitative Reasoning

- ◎ Lectures & Discussions: Use numbers to provide context; explain their meanings and discuss implications
 - This can involve placing historical figures (50 million people died in the 1918 influenza pandemic “Spanish Flu”) in a relevant context (3% of the world’s population), assessing the reliability (these figures are a low estimate), and broader implications (how losing this many people affects a society).
 - Make an active effort to use figures relevant to your discipline, for instance:
 - ❖ Demographics, survey results, consumer information, nutrition facts
 - Good questions to focus discussions include:
 - ❖ **What do the numbers show?**
 - What do the numbers mean? Is there numerical evidence to support a claim?
 - How can seeking and analyzing numbers illuminate important phenomena?
 - How plausible is a possibility in light of back of the envelope calculations?
 - ❖ **How representative is that?**
 - Is there wide variability? What’s the typical range or margin of error?
 - ❖ **Compared to what? What is the context? What information isn’t given?**
 - What's the implicit or explicit frame of reference?
 - What's the unit of measurement?
 - What's the order of magnitude?
- ◎ Written work: Require quantitative information, such as charts, tables, or demographics to be used for context
 - Grade for coherent use of numbers in sentences, appropriate labels on figures
 - Expect students to use data as part of their arguments
 - See <http://serc.carleton.edu/quirk/> for a rubric on grading QR in papers and additional information
- ◎ Student Support & Activities: Focus on student understanding of quantitative information and encourage them to use quantitative reasoning where applicable
 - This can include explaining rubrics and grading schemes to help students understand the impact of low grades or where their study efforts are best spent.
 - Work with students on time management, quantifying the amount of time they need or doing cost-benefit analysis on study habits.
 - Show student groups how to create detailed budget proposals or logistical plans for events.

Inclusion – Creating an Inclusive Classroom

1. **Instead of making inclusive content a ‘special’ section of your course, weave it into the major content thereby model inclusive practice. For example:**
 - Using non-traditional (white, male) examples of thinkers etc. when exemplifying content
 - Using images of examples (especially useful for visual learners)
 - Incorporating maps/charts into general content
2. **Start the semester with a discussion of ‘safe’ discussion, letting the students come up with the ‘rules’ and reminding them during each class until they remind each other.**
 - Letting students talk without interruption
 - Allowing peers to speak without judgment
 - Replying without blame
3. **Revealing your biases (political, religious, cultural, ethnic) to your class at the start of the semester and explaining (accepting) that content delivery is always impacted by internalized biases.**
 - Presenting alternate points of view and explicitly stating the differences
4. **Inclusion is both content and content delivery. Consider what students have to leave at the door to succeed in your class and find ways to rectify that. For example:**
 - Do you only use a white board? What if your students cannot read your writing?
 - Do you use PowerPoints? What if your students are colorblind?
5. **Teaching is more rewarding when the students are ‘getting it’ even when it’s challenging.** Therefore, finding ways to reach all learners will make your course more dynamic, fun, and successful.

Great reads & web resources include:

- *Getting Culture Incorporating Diversity Across the Curriculum*, ed. Regan A.R. Gurung and Loreto R. Prieto (2009)
- *Why Is Disability Missing From the Discourse on Diversity?* Lennard J. Davis (Chronicle of Higher Ed)
- *Teaching for the Uniqueness of Diversity*, James Banks (2002) hosted by the University of Michigan
- *Am I Going to Have to Do This By Myself? Diversity and the Discussion*, Abby Hansen
- *Teaching What I’m Not, Race and Theological Conversation in the Classroom*, Deanna Thompson
- *Resources for Inclusive Teaching*, Center for Instructional Development & Research