Teaching at Hampshire College –
August 2017

Laura Wenk, Dean of Curriculum and Assessment/Associate Professor of Cognition and Education
Overview

- A bit about Hampshire pedagogy
- Activity – Leading with skills; framing with questions
- What does this tell us about course/unit planning?
- What changes/tweaks can you make in your courses?
- Discussion/Your questions – about your courses
Hampshire pedagogy

- Tradition of inquiry
- Student active instruction
- Early and continual feedback and reflection
- Include context of knowledge creation (social, political, economic, etc.)
Why inquiry?

- Inquiry instruction involves
  - Use of methods, tools and thinking of your field
  - Products that rival work in your field (authentic)
- Learning how to think in a field allows students to follow their own questions
- Inquiry-oriented instruction increases interest and participation
- Inquiry leads to integration of ideas
Authentic products and assessment

- Shy away from traditional tests or quizzes (consider other ways to check learning)
- Select products that are natural outcome of inquiry (what would one produce to show they could answer an essential question?)
- Expectations for assessment are clear and specific (not a grade)
  - Include goals on your syllabus
  - Include requirements for evaluation on your syllabus
Student active pedagogy

- Students are involved in sharing their thinking and in explicitly making meaning
- Frequent small group activities
- Activities give students practice in important skills and habits of mind
- Short “lectures” include discussion
- Collaborative work (with check-ins to make sure all are participating)
- Student choice in topic or product where appropriate
- Etc.
Continual feedback and reflection

- Start early in the semester with assignments that ask students to use specific skills (perhaps low-stakes versions of what they will produce by the end)
  - Give feedback for improvement
- Ask students to reflect on how they are doing (at least):
  - Mid-semester
  - End of semester
Integrate content and context

For example:

☑ Consider multiple perspectives (individual and cultural)

☑ Consider power (who creates knowledge, who has access, etc.)

☑ Consider one’s own role in making meaning and applying knowledge to the real world
Question
Inquiry skills and thinking skills

- Be explicit about what students will learn to do
- Give practice with feedback
- Help them see how they are doing/what they need to improve
Washing the Dishes
Questions

- What questions might we ask about dish washing? (think about your field, your experiences, your lives)
  - Think/write a list by yourself
  - Compare your list with one other person – come up with a few that you really like
  - Share with whole group
Questions

- Where are we washing the dishes?
- Who is washing the dishes (who isn’t)?
- Why are they?
- What does washing the dishes mean in different cultures?
- What is a dish?
- How has dishwashing changed over time?
- How much water is used?
- What counts as a well-washed dish? Who decides?
Questions, cont...

- What position/posture during doing?
- What is needed?
- What technology will help us?
- Who gets to decide whose responsibility?
- How do these things effect relationships?
- Who ignores/how does it connect to privilege?
- Why so many dishes?
- Who cooked?
- What are the consequences?
Questions cont.

- What are dishes made of?
- Should you buy paper?
- What are the alternatives?
- Who is old enough?
- Are there classes of people forbidden to touch dishes?
- What are the things associated with dish washing?
- Does this question start or end an argument?
Products/evidence of learning

- Performance
- Docu-film
- Short story
- Chore chart
- Interview
- Ethnography
- Experiment
- Score (event)
Products, cont.

- Rubric for evaluation
- Bibliography
- Journal/blog entry/personal story
- Reproducing the dishes
- Mapping the dishes
- Consumer report of efficiency
- Receipt for paying for dishwashing
- Critical analysis of race/gender/class
- Photographic essay
- Exhibit or analysis of historical change/no washing
Skills and abilities

- Experimental design
- Data analysis
- Covert research
- Environmental research
- Prototyping
- Play testing
- Visual languages
- Intersectional analysis
- Reading primary sources
- Goal setting
Skills and abilities, cont.

- Database search strategies
- Differentiating myth from reality
- Participant observation
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Relational negotiation/listening and questioning/empathy
Taxonomy of Significant Learning – L. Dee Fink

Learning how to learn
- Becoming self-directed
- Inquiring
- Setting goals
- Managing projects

Foundational knowledge
Understand and remember
- Information
- Concepts

Integration
Connecting
- Ideas
- Learning experiences
- Realms of life

Application
- Skills
- Thinking (critical, creative, practical)

Human Dimension
Learning about
- Oneself
- Others

Caring
Developing new
- Feelings
- Interests
- Values
Learning Goals

Teaching and Learning Activities

Feedback and Evaluation
Backwards design

In course or unit planning, it helps to plan backwards

- Consider the **skills/abilities/understandings** you want students to gain
- Consider the **evidence** or **product** that would demonstrate their mastery of the skills and content
- Consider the frame or organizing **question** that will give students a purpose
- Plan **student-active assignments and classes** to build to the final product.
Making use of these ideas

- Whole course level
- Section/unit
- Individual class
- One activity
Activity structures

- How can you get students active in the process?
  - We gave you the “Discussion Book”
  - There are many other ways – keep talking to one another and to us to share new ideas
Discussion

Questions?