

AUTHENTIC EVIDENCE OF STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT OF ESSENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Session Elements

- Essential Learning Outcomes - Assessment Practice – Authentic Evidence
- Definition of Reflective Thinking-*different by discipline?*
- Keys for Teaching with Reflective Thinking
- Authentic Evidence of Students' Attainment of Liberal learning outcomes
- Using Reflective Thinking/Journaling to Assess Liberal Learning Outcomes
- Questions to Consider as We Plan and Practice Assessment

LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

□ **Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World**

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts
- Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

□ **Intellectual and Practical Skills, Including**

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

□ **Personal and Social Responsibility, Including**

- Civic knowledge and engagement local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning
- Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

□ **Integrative Learning, Including**

- Synthesis accomplishment across general and specialized studies
- Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

In this new century, the dizzying pace of change and the unabated prospects for social and environmental disruption will continue to place enormous strains on individuals as well as communities. **Each individual will need sources of inner fortitude, self-knowledge, and personal Renewal. Taking time for reflection on one's own values will be crucial. Everyone will need to consider not just how to pursue a course of action, but the value and integrity of alternative courses of action.**

How, in this kind of environment, do we prepare students to cultivate their own inner resources of spirit and moral courage? How do we enable them to engage moral and social dilemmas with clarity about their own values as well as the capacity to hear and respond to others' deeply held commitments? How do we prepare graduates to make difficult ethical choices in the face of competing pressures? And how, without proselytizing, do we foster students' own development of character, conscience, and examined values?

LEAP-The Principles of Excellence

Principle Seven

Assess Students' Ability to Apply Learning to Complex Problems

Use Assessment to Deepen Learning and to Establish a Culture of Shared Purpose and Continuous Improvement

http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/PrinciplesExcellence_chart.pdf

Reflective Thinking...*not* *critical thinking*

“[T]he process of creating and clarifying the meaning of experience (past or present) in terms of self (self in relation to self and self in relation to the world.)”

- Boyd & Fales . Reflective Learning: Key to Learning from Experience. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 1983

Reflective Thinking *for Business Education*

Schon defines “reflection-in-action” as “on the spot surfacing, criticizing, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena.”

The “art of management” may indicate the extent of “a manager’s reflection, in a context of action, on phenomena which he perceives as incongruent with his intuitive understandings.”

Schon. *The Reflective Practitioner*, Basic Books, 1983.

Assessment Practice

▣ System of Inputs & Outputs

Inputs:

What “we” put in → number of student credit hours, the amount of content exposure, etc..

- *Easily measured, comparable*
- *Measures time in the seat rather than life & learning in the mind*

Outputs:

What “students” demonstrate

- *Harder to obtain, validate, compare*
- *“know it when I see it” or grades-compilation of scores*

To reiterate...

Each individual will need sources of inner fortitude, self-knowledge, and personal renewal. Taking time for reflection on one's own values will be crucial. Everyone will need to consider not just how to pursue a course of action, but the value and integrity of alternative courses of action.

Keys for Teaching with Reflective Thinking

- **Course Goals determine the PURPOSE of Reflective Thinking**

students' abilities in analyzing and improving team skills, interpersonal dynamics, communication, social justice, ethical inquiry, cross cultural understanding, project management or decision making can be emphasized through requiring reflective thinking

- **Professor Expressed Expectations determine the VALUE of Reflective Thinking**

students' perception of value and commitment determined by professor articulating the How?, When?, Why? What will happen if you don't? and the So What?

- **“Lab” for the CONTEXT of Reflective Thinking is needed**

faculty create the “lab” experience by designing the project or series of tasks associated with the course's body of content and linked to essential learning outcomes
In an international marketing class the “lab context” could be a team project to create a new product to meet a need in an emerging market

Technology Facilitated Journaling

Role of Technology

- Simplicity of record keeping
- Simplicity of providing feedback
- Paperless process
- Faculty time management

Tech Applications

- Email- *Looping*
- Blog – student sets up blog and sends link in email
- Wiki
- Word OneNote
- Google applications
- Surveymonkey.com

Example of Course Objectives

- To enhance business decision skills by developing the managerial mindset of reflective practice
- To solve complex problems by developing an effective and high performing team

Rollins, INB 337-International Marketing, Learning Objective

Birmingham-Southern College, BA 400, International Strategic Management, Learning Objective

Assessing Liberal Learning Outcomes

Authentic evidence of students' attainment of liberal learning outcomes via reflective thinking & journaling

Intellectual & Practical Skills

-Communication

*As I worked with my team members, I realized that it is not only important to hear what they are saying, but also to understand where they are coming from- it is sort of like empathy, but more from a business perspective. **One can't truly understand what another is saying unless you can understand the context of those viewpoints.** Each person brings to the table a different background and a different perspective that can uniquely add to an experience. Female, junior, Rollins College*

- Communication

A big problem...is when members don't speak their mind[s] and simply go with the flow.

- Communication

Insuring accurate group communication will involve two efforts from each group member. First, group members must try to communicate in a timely and concise manner, leaving no room for misinterpretation of intent. Secondly, group members must be willing to stop work if a group member has a conflicting opinion but needs more time to concisely and constructively state it. Male, junior, BSC

Intellectual & Practical Skills

-Communication

The conflict area regarding personality types is that we have so many that are similar. It will be necessary to establish a devil's advocate among the group in order to discourage the possibility of group think. Female, junior, BSC

- Communication

At first I was discouraged at the way my team mate showed such strong feelings against my own. The key to successful communication is to be willing to hear everyone's ideas and understand why they thought that way. Reflection toward future action: For the next team meeting, I will be more prepared to face my team mates disagreeing points of views and discuss with more depth why they think that way. My goal is to better understand how they perceive certain situations differently that I would.

-Communication

Some of the conflict areas we ran into were about communication. This miscommunication came between one of the introverts and one of the extroverts who carried on most of the conversation.

Intellectual & Practical Skills

-Teamwork

*I was irritated that my team was going to have to backtrack every time someone missed a meeting. According to the team contract that we came up with in the beginning of the semester, we agreed that if we ever had a problem with one of the teammates we would appoint one to talk to the teammate and explain the teams concerns to him. We gave the teammate the opportunity to demonstrate he could do better. A little rough for a few days, but it all worked out. Future: *In the past I have had similar situations but never did anything about it and let the teammate be a “free rider”. Not only is this harmful to the student that is being a free rider in that he will not learn anything but it is also not fair for the rest of the group in regards to the workload and the grade.* Female, junior, Rollins College*

-Teamwork

[MBPI] Similarities in a group can lead to reassurances among members; a mediocre idea may pass as an excellent idea, because each group member is scared of offend others. Female, junior, BSC

Intellectual & Practical Skills

-Teamwork

It felt like we were uncoordinated. Looking back at the beginning of the project, we just wanted to get our work done as quickly as possible, so we jumped into the work with not much planning nor coordination. With no agreed upon plan, it's no wonder it took as so long to get our objects done.

*it is important that the team spends some time planning and coordinating the project before getting started on it. **Without good planning and coordination the efficiency at how well and how fast a team completes their objects could be very low.** Male, Sophomore, Rollins-Visa student*

-Teamwork

The fact that two members have the tendency to avoid group conflict is positive because it reduces conflicts. ...it is negative because by pleasing and avoiding conflicts, they will hold back their opinions and ideas which can hurt the group's performance. Male, junior, BSC

Intellectual & Practical Skills

Teamwork

The big key will be matching people to what they do best, while still forcing people to come out of their comfort zones when necessary.

It would be natural ...to have conflicts between people who think about things in terms of the details that add to [the] finished product, and people who focus less on the details and more on the big picture. Male, junior, BSC

Teamwork

As a group [collective MBTI], we dislike surprises and want advance warning for things"Js" state their positions and decisions as final... "my way or the highway" is our attitude. ...it will be difficult to remember that 'Sam' is not [a 'J'] the same and does not think and view things in the same manner.

I continue to check myself and closely watch others to find small ways to gain the cooperation of group members who are not willing to participate. Female, junior, BSC

Intellectual & Practical Skills

Teamwork

I think it is important to understand that best way to move our group forward is to recognize our weaknesses and do our best to work with them and minimize their effects. Female ,junior, BSC

Personal & Social Responsibility

Understanding self & effect on others

This week has been a living hell for me....Now, I always try to keep my composure during the meetings and in front of teammates. There is no need to bring them into my external life and they don't deserve that, but this is hard and mentally draining. A description of my personality type is that I "wear my emotions on my sleeve." This makes it even harder to conceal my feelings, however only a certain few people can really tell when I have something on my mind. I've gone outside my personality comfort zone to keep the harmony of our group, and I'm happy about that, but it doesn't mean it's not hard. Male, sophomore, Rollins

-Understanding self & effect on others

Showing consideration to people, to a reasonable degree, can often lead to that person getting back on track. I showed compassion to a team member by giving her a second chance to improve attendance at meetings and work quality instead of firing her from the group, and impressively, that team member came through and delivered. Male, sophomore, Rollins

Personal & Social Responsibility

-Understanding self & effect on others

I have a very dominant personality and sometimes take over group discussionslearning to accept people who are different from me and learning to adjust my stubbornness so that I'm not overbearing. Female, junior, BSC

-Understanding self & effect on others

If I would have just slowed down and thought to myself “hey, this girl is really smart and probably has something to say, yet she isn't saying anything, that probably means I should ask her what she thinks”, we would have received a lot of valuable input ...that we did not get, because we were too busy talking over her. Male, junior, BSC

-Valuing diversity

Diversity within a team can offer a more thorough breakdown of the issues and generate more alternative strategies or decisions. Male, Junior, Rollins

Personal & Social Responsibility

-Ethical reasoning

I again re-did the research and found no evidence to support his statement. ...he lied. I decided to write the professor and copy the class informing of the “error” ... no evidence of this product could be found in that market. I am glad I took the risk to email everyone with the information, otherwise, I would have allowed the class and professor to have the wrong information about a product and market, a big no no for any kind of marketing environment. Future action: I will stress to any team member I come across in the future that honesty and integrity are just as important as any analysis framework or situation’s consequence that may arise. Male, junior, Rollins

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Personal & Social Responsibility

□ Intercultural knowledge

Cultural differences definitely play a role in how the group interacts. At the first meeting, a couple of the members choose not to drink alcoholic beverages because of religious convictions. The other did...they were the most involved in conversation and game we were playing.

When...discussing ethics and morals, political leanings of each individual drives the conversation and creates a great group dynamic, but has also led to group members shutting down when they are the only ones with that particular view. Male, junior, BSC

□ Integrative learning

...what works in some places may be a failure somewhere else ...polling and surveys are invaluable and can not only prove/disprove an existing idea but also breed new ideas and directions". Male, sophomore, Rollins

Assessment: Course Specific Liberal Learning Outcomes

- Designed 16 item Likert Instrument, with two scales, administered to 48 students

- Paired t-test (Pre & Post Test)
 - Scale 1: Personal Practice of Reflective Thinking
 - Scale 2: Enhanced Teamwork via Reflective Thinking

Assessment: Course Specific Liberal Learning Outcomes

- Personal Practice of Reflective Thinking
 - 77% indicated excellent-good ability to “thoughtfully and deeply reflect on the implications of your actions during an encounter with others”, up from 47%
 - 80% indicated improvement in the ability to develop an understanding of why events occurred, up from 66%

Assessment: Course Specific Liberal Learning Outcomes

- Enhanced Teamwork via Reflective Thinking
 - Over 80% reported excellent-good ability to recognize if an event could have long term implications
 - 90% perceived improvement in their ability to be mindful of the context of collaboration in the moment

What have we learned while doing this?

- Reflective process validated for the student, faculty, and the program attainment of liberal learning outcomes
- Using reflecting thinking/journaling is flexible and adaptable to course content and program objectives
- Critical role of faculty as coach in validating and guiding students to realization of liberal learning outcomes
- Faculty workload can be managed by employing technology assisted processes

Questions to Consider

*Principles of
Excellence*

*Use
Assessment
to Deepen
Learning and
to Establish a
Culture of
Shared
Purpose and
Continuous
Improvement*

- *To what extent has assessment led to homogenizing and standardizing the product of education, rather than fostering the teachable moments and coaching/mentoring of students on the path to understanding and valuing liberal learning and self discovery that it can awaken?*
- *To what extent do we as faculty & administrators participate in assessment practices to affirm the institution to external stakeholders, rather than enhance each student's development in attaining liberal learning outcomes?*