

Thursday, January 21, 2010, 4:15-5:30
American Association of Colleges and Universities Annual Meeting

Systematic Improvement of Teaching and Learning through Experimentation and Assessment

**David Pace and Leah Shopkow presenting for
The History Learning Project**

Three Frameworks for Systematic Improvement

- I. About the History Learning Project
- II. Framework I: Methodology
- III. Framework II: Evidence
- IV. Framework III: Social Network

The History Learning Project is supported by grants from the Spencer and Teagle Foundations; we are also supported by the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the History Department at Indiana University.

History Learning Project: Three Frameworks for Systematic Improvement

Presented by David Pace and Leah Shopkow

This project has been funded by: The Teagle and Spencer Foundations, and the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the History Department of Indiana University

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

About the History Learning Project

- **Arlene Díaz, Joan Middendorf, David Pace & Leah Shopkow, Directors (three from History, one Education and Campus Instructional Consulting)**
- **Four Senior Fellows (History Department faculty members and instructors)**
- **Two Graduate Research Fellows per year (graduate students)**
- **Project Assistant**



The History Learning Project's Activities

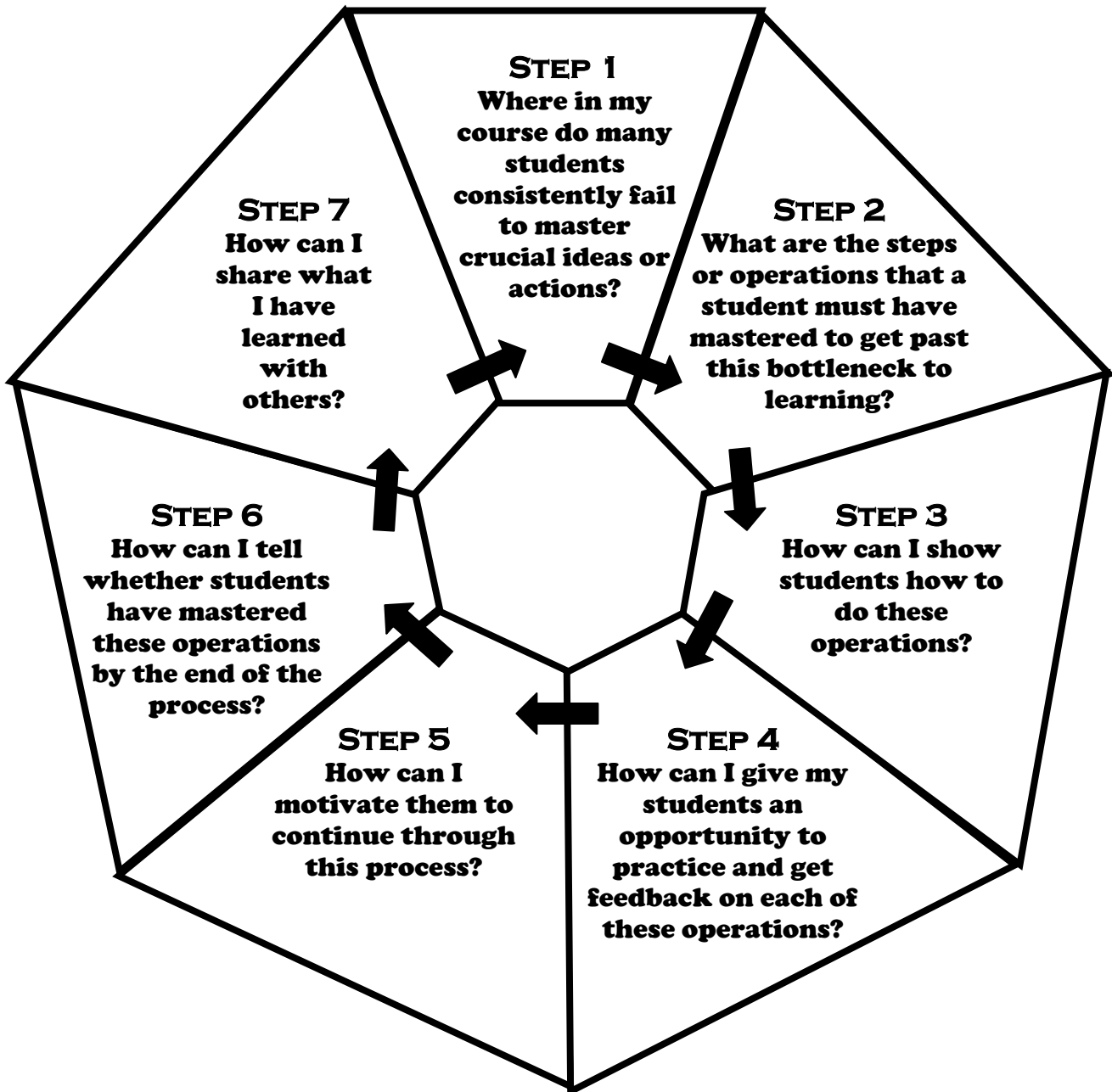
- General Surveys
 - Think-alouds and interviews
 - Investigations in nine classes
 - Primary Sources
 - Written Argument
 - Affective Impediments to History Learning
-

Framework 1: Methodology

The “Decoding the Disciplines” Process



The Decoding the Disciplines Process



Framework 2: Research

Research provides evidence to support the methodological framework and to suggest applications

Framework 2: Research

Example: David Pace's Course

Bottleneck:

- Students often throw random facts at an answer hoping that they will stick

Definition of Necessary Operations

- Uncover the propositions whose validity one would need to demonstrate in order to make an interpretation credible to readers.
-

Framework 2: Research

Example: David Pace's Course

Modeling, Practice, and Feedback

- Focus on defining basic propositions implicit in an interpretation in class presentations, in on-line assignments, and in-class team exercises

Assessment

- Evaluate on-line assignments
 - Pre- and post-tests that explicitly ask students to list the things that they would have to prove to make a specific thesis credible
-

Framework 2: Research

Example: Arlene Díaz's Course

Fall 2008

- GOAL: *Analyze primary sources; *Put them in conversation with other course materials *Produce a historical argument
 - HOW? °Modeled the expected disciplinary thinking needed to execute these skills; ° Provided some opportunities to practice throughout the semester
 - RESULTS: -Improvement in understanding what needed to be done, -Yet still factual and descriptive writings rather than interpretative essays
 - PROBLEM: *Lack of motivation prevented students from bringing the several skills learned in class together in their essay exams.*
-

Framework 2: Research

Example: Arlene Díaz's Course

Fall 2009

- Used Team-Based Learning (TBL) Michaelsen (2004)
 - Preliminary Results:
 - Improved student ability to **connect sources**
 - Improved student thinking shown in **thesis statements**
 - Compared to last year non-TBL class
 - faster progress to higher levels of interpretation
 - more student enthusiasm about improving quality of work, particularly in students performing below average and at average
 - What's next? *Improve course mechanics: Readiness Assessment Tests, rubrics, in-class production of Application Projects and improve team peer evaluations.*
-

Team-Based Learning in a History Class: Using TBL to Motivate Disciplinary Thinking

Arlene J. Díaz (Associate Professor of History and Director of Latino Studies), and Joan Middendorf (Associate Director of Campus Instructional Consulting and Adjunct Professor in Higher Education) Indiana University-Bloomington)

Background: The course Latin American Colonial History Survey has been part of a 3-year Teagle and Spencer Foundation study to find effective ways to help students construct arguments based on documentary evidence and to express this in writing.¹ In particular, the class focused on helping students analyze primary sources and put them in conversation with other course materials in order to produce a historical argument. Even though the instructor explicitly modeled the expected disciplinary thinking needed to execute these skills to the students, and provided some opportunities to practice, many students were not motivated to bring the several skills together for their essay exams. In the fall of 2009 the class was revamped using Team Based Learning (TBL) (Michaelsen, 2004) to address the motivation problem.

Description: Using the *Decoding the Discipline* (DtD) Method (Middendorf and Pace, 2004), the instructor had already analyzed major bottlenecks to learning in this course and ways of modeling these, including the weekly learning outcomes. This prior work allowed the seamless transformation of this lecture and active learning class into a TBL class, which in turn helped to solve the motivation problem within the DtD method. In the non-TBL version of the same class, most students consistently went back to factual and descriptive writings rather than come closer to interpretative essays. When they did active learning exercises, they were told the work was good, but there was no explicit rubric for everyone to publicly measure their work against. How did TBL help? First, the individual and group Readiness Assessment Tests were used to motivate students to look for readings' thesis statement and major points rather than memorization of facts. Students were allowed to bring their reading notes (to promote note-taking) to the quizzes and this encouraged them to focus on understanding the content of the reading. Second, in the eight Application Projects throughout the semester students practiced solving historical problems by extracting and interpreting evidence from documents and by formulating arguments with their teams. The explicit and very public way the Application Projects were presented and evaluated provided immediate, specific feedback about the kind of thinking required. By the time of their take-home essay exams, students had already analyzed much of the materials in groups, and had practiced the interpretative not descriptive work.

Preliminary Results: Two of the four essay exams have been coded based on the course bottlenecks. In a scale from 0 to 4, the level of students' thinking shown in their essay arguments and source analysis was assessed, assigning a "0" when the execution was wrong or non-existent, all the way to a 4, which denoted a high level of interpretation and synthesis. The level of thinking demonstrated in the thesis statements improved from an average of 1.82 in the first exams to 2.85 in the second exams (out of 4). In terms of the level of thinking when connecting sources, the improvement was remarkable, from a mean of 0.71 in the first exam to 2.79 in the second. All of these means were statistically significant. Compared to last year's non-TBL class, students were able to move faster to higher levels of interpretation, and more students are enthusiastic on improving their work. Also, improvement seems to be more evident among below average and average students.

¹ This project is being carried out by the History Learning Project (Leah Shopkow, David Pace, Joan Middendorf and Arlene Díaz) at Indiana University-Bloomington. <http://www.iub.edu/~hlp/>

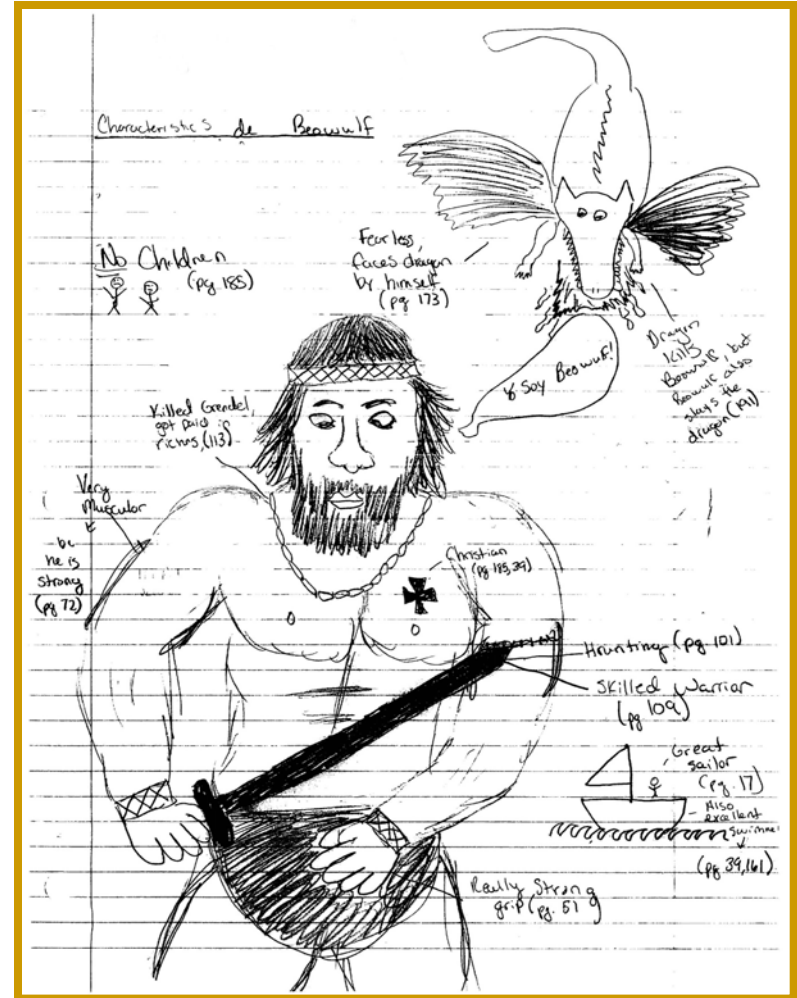
Framework 2: Research

Example: Leah Shopkow's Course

Medieval Heroes

Fall 2008

Problem: To get students to understand that historical texts have audiences and reflect social realities



Framework 2: Research

Example: Leah Shopkow's Course

Changes for Spring 2010 in Medieval Heroes:

- Explicit focus on social relationships in texts
 - More focused units with more secondary source support
 - More modeling and practice of close reading
 - TBL (inspired by Arlene Díaz)
 - More explicit examination of self as audience
-

CLIP® - Mozilla Firefox
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The Passion of St Polycarp.pdf - Document Viewer

Notes

Search: Enter a Keyword

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It was enlightening to bystanders because enduring an hour of punishment by earthly hands prevented the eternal-punishment in hell.

Martyrdom automatically dispenses angelic status

Satan conceptualized as interrogator

What are the "wild beasts?"

- Devil was unsuccessful in persuading them to recant
- Germanicus even brought the wild beast to himself
- Quintus sacrificed

Those sent to die welcomed death.

1) The Bible's depiction of Jesus' death shares this similarity. The Jewish councils turned away everyone to put

groan, showing all of us that in that hour the martyrs of Christ ceased to be tortured in the flesh, or rather that the Lord, standing by, associated himself with them.

2:3 And clinging to the grace of Christ, they despised the torture of this world, purchasing by the endurance of a single hour remission from eternal punishment. And the fire of their harsh tormentors was cold to them, for they had before their eyes the goal of escaping the eternal and never-quenched fire, and with the eyes of their heart they looked up to the good things that are reserved for those who endure, which no ear has heard nor eye seen, nor has it entered into the heart of man, but which were shown by the Lord to those people who were no longer men, but already angels.

2:4 And in a similar manner, those who had been condemned to the wild beasts endured dreadful punishments, lying upon beds of thorns and punished with various other tortures, so that the tyrant might turn them by assiduous punishment, if possible, to a denial of the faith.

Chapter 3

3:1 For the devil contrived many things against them, but thanks be to God, he

shopkowl@indiana.edu

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Framework 3: Social Framework

- Sharing results and ideas
 - Synergies
 - Legitimation
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Example: Decoding the Disciplines Course Planning Template (for Medieval Heroes)¹

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		Non-content Objectives of the week	Content and Instruction	Readings and Topic	Modeling(What is being modeled?)	Practice(What form will the practice take?)	Assessment(What is being assessed? What method used?)	Pre- and post Assessments (What is being assessed?)	Point
2	Unit 1	Get the class establish--Create teams--Practice doing "close reading" of the source and interrogating it--Narrating the textbook	Late Roman antiquity and early Christian society in the Barbarian West	Early Christianity and Early Barbarian Europe					
3	Week 1--January 11, 13	Get the students familiar with the syllabus; get them divided in sections into teams;	Monday: Questions for lecture section: Philosophical underpinnings--why TBL, why little lecturing. Why should we use narrative sources and fiction in history? How can we use them in a useful way? Wednesday: pretest on audience; what do they know about audience and historical context and why should they care? Also about the teams In discussion sections: form criterion based teams, have sample readiness assessment.	The syllabus, The first part of chapter 1	Using CLIP	RAPs	Non-graded Readiness assessment in discussion sections	Pre-test assessment on the notion of audience in Wednesday class; homework assignment using highlighter for Polycarp life, due Monday at noon.	0
	Week 2--January 18, no class--MLK day, Jan. 20	Begin teaching students about close reading	Wednesday: readiness assessment on textbook chapter, demonstration of how to narrativize the textbook. In discussion sections: close reading using Polycarp	Remainder of textbook chapter 1; The Passion of St. Polycarp	Narrating the textbook in the main class: close reading of Polycarp in discussion sections. Kalani and Eric will model using the first three chapters, then the students will	Practice using CLIP. Students will have to read and write comments on the reading (as homework); close reading for different kinds of evidence	Readiness assessment on week's readings in Wednesday's class; ensuring that students have done the reading		20

¹ ©History Learning Project 2009

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Links

History Learning Project: <<http://www.iub.edu/~hlp/>>