Assessment of Student Academic Achievement: Shifting the Focus from the Teacher Teaching to the Student Learning

This workshop will explore and demonstrate assessment mechanisms that make student learning visible to the professor. By experiencing assessment as a solution rather than as a problem, participants experience for themselves how (a) assessment shifts responsibility from the teacher teaching to the student learning, (b) an assessment-based pedagogy yields useful feedback simultaneously for both professor and student, and (c) implementing this approach, the professor saves time and effort while students learn faster and deeper. Accordingly, everyone goes home happier.

The first workshop begins with the posing of a problem --a conundrum-- that has popular appeal and a lot of surrounding myth. The goal of the session, of course, is not to solve the problem but, rather, to engage the participants inside the assessment process, whether they do this privately in front of their own computer or more publicly through on-line interaction.

During the second session, we will examine the case shared at the end of the first session and explore more assessment approaches that lead to satisfactory solutions. At the end of the second session, the facilitator will point out that he did not actually teach them any answers. Rather, the participants learned new things (because they wanted to) and assembled them themselves in order to solve the problem. This method works at many levels, including both the on-line and F2F environments.
Helping College Students Develop Critical Thinking Skills

A college education goes far beyond learning content. The mark of a well educated person is not so much “what” they have learned, but more importantly, does he/she know “how” to think critically. When our students complete their degrees, do they know how to find material they will need to know and can they evaluate the legitimacy of the source (information literacy)? Are they capable of analyzing information, applying what they know to new situations, and evaluating credibility? College teachers today need to ensure that our students are developing these critical thinking skills. This presentation will focus on how to promote critical thinking skills in today’s college students. Specific teaching strategies that foster critical thinking will be discussed. Participants will learn (1) what critical thinking, also known as “deep” thinking, entails; (2) how to develop discussion questions that promote critical thinking; and (3) how to use specific teaching strategies that promote critical thinking.

For more detailed information:  click here. [1]

Identifying and Reaching Unprepared Students: Strategies for Creating Success in the College Classroom

Many students enter college unaware of the expectations and underprepared for the academic rigors of college. Their initial enthusiasm and excitement is often replaced in a matter of weeks by varying degrees of discouragement. For many students, this first year of college is the “make or break” year. A national research study found that almost half of first-time students who leave their initial institutions by the end of the first year do not return to higher education. Identifying and engaging with these students is crucial to their persistence. Participants in this session will learn teaching strategies and techniques for engaging underprepared students, allowing them a better chance at success in the college classroom. As a result of participating in this session, participants will be able to: (1) recognize characteristics and/or behaviors of underprepared students; (2) describe best practices to engage learners; (3) identify techniques that can be incorporated into their classes that will lead to student success.

For more detailed information:  click here. [2]

Motivating Today’s College Students - The Millennial Generation

There is no longer much debate over whether or not generational differences among students influence their learning styles, academic performance, attitudes and behavior. Today’s college students, the millennial generation, are a different breed of students in many ways. This presentation will focus on who these students are, how they prefer to learn, and how instructors can motivate them. Participants will learn specific pedagogical strategies that they can implement immediately in their classrooms to help them engage today’s students. Participants will learn (1) how millennial students prefer to
learn, (2) pedagogical strategies that promote student learning, (3) how to engage millennial students, and (4) how to keep today’s students motivated throughout the semester.

For more detailed information: click here. [4]

Promote Active Learning by Warming up the Classroom Atmosphere

Oftentimes, the affective dimension, that is, how students feel in the classroom, is overlooked, and yet research shows that this factor is one of the most significant in student success. This presentation will focus on how to make the classroom atmosphere more hospitable and welcoming to include more students in the learning process. Participants will learn specific tools and strategies that they can implement immediately to make their classrooms more welcoming and improve student retention and success. Participants will be able to (1) promote student-student interactions, (2) encourage student participation, (3) make the classroom environment more welcoming, and (4) improve student retention and success.

For more detailed information: click here. [5]

Retaining Online Students: A Student Affairs and Faculty Perspective (2 sessions)

A case study from Rio Salado Community College, a large online college, will present best practices for promoting retention in an online learning environment. The Faculty perspective session will highlight the innovative use of data to identify students who may need additional support. The use of predictive modeling analytics and how it can convert this data into action by identifying learners with the highest risk of attrition and the circumstances affecting their success will be discussed. Presenters will show how you can use this data to design a corresponding communication campaign and develop other relevant instructor strategies for retaining and reaching online students.

The second part of this presentation will discuss the Student Affairs perspective and will highlight the use of an innovative virtual student union called the RioLounge. Participants will also see how Rio Salado College uses online orientation to improve student retention and success. Finally, information will be provided on how CRM technology can be leveraged to encourage persistence.

For more detailed information: click here. [6]

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