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Critical pedagogy: Building strong learning communities

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Critical pedagogy: Building strong learning communities.

The practice and the need it addresses

Build community

Strengthens instructor-student relationship; peer interactions; connection to course content, and sense of belonging. Shifts normative power structures and empowers students to co-construct the learning experience. Student voice matters.

Think about your thinking

On-going opportunities to learn and practice higher order thinking (H.O.T.) increases awareness of cognition, connections with learning outcomes & real world application. Strengthening H.O.T. skills is key to success in college & life.

Collaborative learning

Strengthens self-efficacy, sense of belonging, community, group outcomes & cooperative student learning.

Shift to formative assessments

Learning becomes enjoyable. Students are highly engaged. Attendance increases. Promotes creativity and innovation, while continuously strengthening community.

Self-management & recognition

Strengthens community, increases sense of self-efficacy, and improves learning outcomes. Transferable to life skills.

Practice inquiry & connections

Differentiate Ella Baker and Jim Crow questions and offer opportunities to practice. Use graphic organizers and concept maps to help visualize connections and write academic papers.

Evidence this practice benefits UNLV Students

Build community

Students perform best within caring & supportive interpersonal relationships citing more positive dispositions to learning, increased satisfaction with school, and higher academic engagement (Klem & Connell, 2004; Kohl, 1998).

Think about your thinking

Classroom activities requiring higher order thinking that test students at the same cognitive level ensure high academic achievement and a deep conceptual understanding of skills/class content. (Crowe et al., 2008).

Collaborative learning

Employers hire based on soft skills of communication, teamwork, & critical thinking. Learning to work effectively in a group decreases anxiety & avoidance behaviors that contradict intended learning.

Shift to formative assessments

Students exposed to authentic tasks that are multidimensional, focus on growth & higher levels of cognitive thinking for meaningful learning (Montgomery, 2010).

Self-management & recognition

External barriers challenge student's ability to focus on assignments & intake new information. Caring classrooms offer self-management tools & recognitions to increase student grit & growth (Gay, 2010).

Practice inquiry & connections

Increased exposure to organization, inquiry & developing questions strengthens critical thinking skills.

Resources and where to find them

Build community

Dialogic Circle Participation Monitoring Tool

Legend: I= Initiated comment, R= Responded to prompt

- Write names of participants by the smaller circles.
- Write an "I" when participants initiate their own comment, and "R" when participants respond.
- Be mindful of participants who have few or no "I"s or "R"s"

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Think about your thinking

Bloom's Taxonomy

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Collaborative learning

Presenter	Person is in charge of leading the presentation of group members, activity and final product to the rest of the class.	Time Keeper	Person keeps the group tasks within recommended time frames and offers 5, 3 and 1 minute warnings to group.
Facilitator	Ensures that everyone contributes to the development of product, ensures all voices are heard, and facilitates the activity/product development.	Supply Engineer	Person is dedicated to retrieving relevant materials and supplies for product development.
Encourager	Person is responsible for encouraging and motivating members in the group, celebrating good ideas, collaboration, and product completion. Good job words encouraged!	Note-Taker/ Scribe	Person takes relevant notes, documenting key ideas, and scribes for group.

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Shift to formative assessments

Create	Create a motivational poster to encourage high school students overcoming challenging times
Evaluate	Evaluate the impact of role models and adults on Cedric and your life as a one page reflection/journal entry.
Analyze	Categorize the colleges listed in the text by tier/rank/selection process. How do they compare to each other?

Self-management & recognition

Practice inquiry & connections

Ella Baker Questions	Jim Crow Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open-ended questions Elicit critical thought, problem solving and Higher ordering thinking (H.O.T.) Allows for meaningful dialogue Characterized by participant to participant dialogue without additional prompting by facilitator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed questions Perpetuates lower ordering thinking (parking L.O.T.) Minimizes dialogue Characterized by continuous prompting by facilitator

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How other UNLV teachers might adopt this practice

Build community

Integrate intentional name/identity teambuilding to review syllabus, class expectations, & course. Maintain weekly.

- One clap for good things in student's lives.
- Co-construct cooperation contract with shared agreements; everyone signs; posted in class.
- Use dialogic monitoring tool to encourage participation. Think-pair-share & neighbor talks.

Think about your thinking

Teach Bloom's taxonomy by co-constructing content related H.O.T. question stems. Motivate students to move out of the parking L.O.T. of education and into the H.O.T. spot of innovators, CEOs, leaders, and critical thinkers in your content area.

Collaborative learning

Use role cards to teach group work. Allow students to negotiate roles to ensure everyone has a meaningful way to contribute.

Shift to Formative Assessments

Include formative assessments that require analysis, evaluation, and creation relevant to course content and learning outcomes. Use product cards to encourage creativity, and promote authentic assessments. Rubrics!

Self-management & recognition

Celebrate student resilience. Teach students to self-validate, encourage peers, and use a growth mindset. Offer informal awards ceremony; meaningful feedback; recognition cards/notes; end semester with a potluck ☺

Practice inquiry & connections

Encourage frequent use of graphic organizers, concept maps, & critical inquiry.