Teaching of Psychology:
Ideas and Innovations

Sponsored by: Farmingdale State University

Proceedings and Papers of the 20th Annual Conference
on Undergraduate Teaching of Psychology

March 29–31, 2006

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The 20th Annual Conference on Undergraduate Teaching of Psychology was held March 29-31, 2006 at Kutsher's Country Club in Monticello, NY. The conference was sponsored by the Psychology Department of the Farmingdale State University.

The conference featured two keynote speakers. Dr. David Myers, who spoke courtesy of Worth Publishers, delivered an address titled *"Thirty Eight Years Professing Psychology: Lessons I Have Learned."* Dr. Ellen Pastorino delivered an address titled *"Being Learning-Centered: The Inclusive Classroom,"* which was courtesy of Thompson Learning. Participants also had a number of presentations from which to choose; an array of publishers' displays to visit; and many colleagues, old and new, with whom to network. Twenty-eight abstracts and ten complete papers are included in these proceedings.

The success of the conference was due to the continuing efforts of many people. The conference committee was expertly chaired by Dr. Gene Indenbaum who had the assistance of Dr. Judith Levine, Dr. Marilyn Blumenthal, and Ms. Barbara Sarringer. We would also like to extend our thanks to Worth Publishing and Thompson Learning for arranging for the keynote speakers to join us.

PROGRAM & ABSTRACTS

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

REGISTRATION: 2:00-2:30 p.m.

SESSION 1 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Teaching Child Cognitive Development through Chekhov's Story "Grisha"
Anna Toom, Touro College, NY

Cognitive development in the transition period from infancy to early childhood seems to be one of the most complicated aspects of Child Psychology. Chekhov's short story *Grisha*, a unique illustration of the cognitive functioning of a 2-year 8-month-old boy, can be effectively used in teaching the topic. The story contains vivid and detailed descriptions of the child's perceptions, speech, thinking, concept formation, and development of a categorical structure essential for his further understanding of reality. The presentation explains the methodology for working with the story in the classroom and discusses the main tasks of the instructor for its successful application.

Jeopardy in the Classroom: "I'll Take Archetypes for 300, Alex"
Dante Mancini & Herman Huber*, College of Saint Elizabeth, NJ

Perhaps one of the more challenging tasks in the teaching of psychology is determining how to stimulate student interest during in-class review sessions for upcoming examinations. Traditionally, these sessions can quickly become repetitive and dull for well-prepared students, while overwhelming and ultimately unproductive for ill-prepared students. However, we have used a method of increasing student interest and incentive for examination review that involves team cooperation and competition, and with the aid of modern technology, is also exciting and downright fun. We will discuss the use of non-traditional learning tools and demonstrate the use of a highly interactive Jeopardy-style TV game show software program as a method of in-class review for examinations. Attendees at the presentation will have an opportunity to actually participate in a game and gain first-hand experience.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

RM 2: WORKSHOP

Teaching and Confronting the "ISMS": A Hands-on Workshop
Charles L. Richman, Wake Forest University, NC

Teaching interdisciplinary undergraduate psychology courses that deal with contemporary and historic "isms", with an emphasis on psychological theory and data, is both an exciting and a challenging venture. This "hands-on-workshop" will aid instructors in their development courses that are designed to explore and ameliorate the "isms". The workshop may also help instructors integrate this information into their existing courses.

SESSION 2: 4:00 - 5:15 p.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Using an Electronic Portfolio System in Program Evaluation
Patricia A. Oswald and Katherine Zaromatidis, Iona College, NY

In this presentation we will discuss the use of Task Stream, an electronic portfolio system, in evaluating goals and performance outcomes in the psychology curriculum. Increasingly colleges and universities are asked to provide evidence that students are successfully mastering the goals and performance outcomes adopted by their schools. One way to meet this expectation is with the development of student portfolios, which can showcase students' work over the course of their academic careers. Task Stream allows one to use goals and performance outcomes in evaluating assignments. Individual student proficiency is assessed and student work can be archived. In addition, this system allows one to aggregate data across courses and/or semesters for program evaluation or for accreditation purposes. During this presentation we will discuss the application of Task Stream to undergraduate psychology courses and specific examples will be provided.

An Academic Rational Beliefs Scale: Development, Validation, and Application
Paul J. Egan*, Joseph R. Canale, Royce M. White, & Peter M. del Rosario, Marist College, NY

Using factor and reliability analysis, this study developed a measure of beliefs about academics among college students along a rational-irrational continuum. Additional analysis demonstrated the measure's cross sample generalizability, it's convergent and discriminant validity and ability to detect changes after intervention. Applications of the instrument for identifying students in the classroom or during orientation who hold beliefs that might interfere with academic success, as well as remediating these beliefs are also explored.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

RM 2: PANEL PRESENTATIONS

Imaginary Audience and Personal Fable Revisited: Implications for College Teaching

Paul D. Schwartz, Lawrence Force, Rae Fallon, Amanda Maynard, Sarah Uzelac, & Sharon Cohen, Mount Saint Mary College, NY

The behavioral correlates of egocentrism in adolescence has in no small part been expanded upon and quantified by the early and later work of Dr. David Elkind. He developed the Imaginary Audience Scale and Personal Fable Scale as a means of quantifying these behavioral correlates. Our study revisited these scales with today's adolescents and found somewhat different results than Dr. Elkind and his colleagues found. Rather than just a dissipation of both measures of egocentrism, we found an increase in egocentrism among younger college students. This increase has potential implications for contemporary college teachers of psychology as well as for teachers of other subjects. Dr. Elkind and we are continuing to work in the area of emerging adulthood with one of the hypotheses under study being a belief that the egocentrism in adolescence, rather than diminishing in late adolescence, increases when an individual encounters a new environment or experience.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

Reception: ***5:30 – 6:30 pm***
(INCLUDING WINE & BEER
ON THE HOUSE)

Dinner: ***6:30 pm***

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. David Myers

"Thirty Eight Years Professing Psychology: Lessons I have Learned"
Speaker and Reception Courtesy of Worth Publishing

After Dinner: ***Hospitality Room***

Thursday, March 30, 2006

BREAKFAST: 7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

SESSION 3: 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Preventing "I Didn't Know" Syndrome: Decreasing Plagiarism in Student Writing
Angela L. Walker, Quinnipiac University, CT

Exercises designed to decrease unintentional plagiarism in psychological research reports were administered and formally evaluated. The exercises included students participating in an interactive plagiarism lecture and creating "paraphrasing" notes. The paraphrasing skills of the students who participated in the exercises were compared to a control group. Preliminary content analysis suggests that the accuracy of students' paraphrasing was significantly greater for students who participated in the exercises than the control group. However, both groups reported equal levels of confidence in their ability to paraphrase. Results indicate that the exercises may serve as a potential tool for reducing plagiarism in student writing.

The Buttermilk Exercise Revisited: Organizational Reflux
Frederick Tesch* & Stanley Bazan, Western Connecticut State University, CT

The original Buttermilk Exercise (Harvey, 1979) is designed "to demonstrate the process of interpersonal influence and personal change" and "to 'warm up' groups that are interested in exploring the dynamics of change." The essence of the exercise is one person's persuading another person or a group to drink a glass of buttermilk (often colored with food dye). Typically the persuader and targets are peers. Our variation involves creating a simple organizational hierarchy (executives, middle managers, workers) and treating the buttermilk persuasion as analogous to implementing a new organizational policy. We will describe our variation, its positive and negative features, and typical student responses.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

RM 2: PANEL PRESENTATION

Bringing Discussion Into A Classroom
Lana Nenide, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI, Fabian Novello, Clark State Community College, WI, & Joyce Hemphill, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI

We will share experiences of bringing group discussions and course debates into a classroom. It may be particularly challenging to encourage student discussions in a large classroom setting, where students are more likely to acquire a sense of anonymity and unaccountability. This may negatively relate to the students' learning experiences as well as their understanding and retaining of issues, concepts, and domains. Tools used to support students, including procedures for implementing discussion groups, rubric for grading, as well as the structure of the debates will be discussed.

10:00-10:20 a.m.
Publishers' Displays and Coffee

SESSION 4: 10:20-11:20 a.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATION

Integrating Community and Psychology: Developing a Service-Learning Psychology Course
Gretchen Wehrle, Notre Dame de Namur University, CA & Michelle Vilchez, Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, CA

Notre Dame de Namur University and the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center have worked together as co-educators to teach a service-learning course, "Community Psychology", which focuses on student civic engagement and community dialogues. This workshop will examine how to develop a service-learning course, with special emphasis on ensuring that the needs of the students as well as the community partner are addressed. Participants will have an opportunity to share their successes and challenges in creating diverse service-learning opportunities for students and to reflect on how faculty, community partners, and students all have a role in developing "vibrant communities and campuses."

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

Attitude Change after a Seminar on Homelessness: Causes and Consequences
Elizabeth B. Gardner*, Kate M. Cota, Jocelyn E. Collen, Talia R. Pettini, & Nicole A. Williams, Fairfield University CT

This study examined whether students' attitudes toward people who are homeless would be affected by a seminar on the causes and consequences of homelessness. Students completed two measures at the beginning and end of the course, which revealed significant changes in attitude toward people who are homeless. The data supported our hypothesis that this seminar could change students' attitudes toward people who are homeless in the direction of increased understanding of the multiple causes of homelessness and the responsibility of society to address, not ignore, homelessness.

RM 2: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Motivating Distributed Study
William R. Balch, Penn State, Altoona, PA

As a way of encouraging students to increase their distributed study, I performed a classroom experiment to illustrate the spacing effect. By having students score their own recall protocols and indicate their results with a show of hands, I could demonstrate the effect quickly and directly to them. An objective evaluation showed that the exercise effectively conveyed the content areas covered by the experiment, and students' subject ratings suggested that the demonstration helped convince them of the actual benefits of distributed study.

Going Deep: First Observations on Teaching Deep Process Studying
Robert A. Dushay, Morrisville State College, NY

Previous research has indicated that students commonly do not study enough, and when they do, they use inefficient techniques. I am attempting to teach better studying techniques in a Practical Study Skills course at Morrisville State College. Students were assigned to small study groups, and class time was provided for students to meet in these groups. Group cohesion was built by offering bonus points on exams based on group success, and group members were shown how to teach each other the key concepts they would be tested on. I will present preliminary observations and findings on this technique's results.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

SESSION 5: 11:30-12:30 p.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATION

Teaching With Vision Loss: Making the Grade in Academia
Christine M. Szostak, California School of Professional Psychology, Alliant University, CA & Lauren S. Seifert, Malone College, OH

First-time faculty appointments are often fairly difficult to manage when an individual is fully sighted. For the visually impaired/totally blind professor such opportunities may present additional unique challenges. A first-hand account from a novice perspective will begin to examine many of these issues and experiences. Strategies, ideas, accommodations, and experiences will be explored and discussed.

The Professor as a Therapist: Applying Psychoanalytic Principles to Teaching College Students
Peter Heinze*, Ramapo College of New Jersey, NJ

This presentation focuses on how, when using a psychoanalytic approach to understand both student and professor behavior, the instructor is left with new ways in which to understand a number of dynamics, rather than simply relying on traditional or habitual methods of responding. Additionally, the system of ethics that is chosen to dictate class policies is analyzed in terms of the underlying meaning it has for both the instructor and student.

RM 2: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Nannies in the Classroom: Using Reality Shows in a Child Development Course
Joyce A Hemphill, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI & Judith R. Levine, Farmingdale State, NY

There is an established tradition in psychology of using video clips from movies and television shows to illustrate various concepts in psychology. However, as fiction, the situations and behaviors that are portrayed are necessarily contrived. Thus, anything, no matter how unrealistic, is possible. Serendipitously, the latest fad in television is the reality show. Two of the more realistic in this genre are Nanny 911 and Supernanny. Both of these shows are excellent vehicles for illustrating various concepts associated with parenting styles and discipline. In our presentation we will illustrate how we used clips from these shows in a Child Development course. We will discuss the reactions of our students.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

Make Room for Daddy: Teaching Fatherhood in Psychology Classes

Rhea Parsons*, Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York, NY

In child, developmental, and other psychology classes, mothers are continuously discussed as children's main caretakers and remain the primary focus of research studies and textbook chapters. Fathers have only recently received attention in psychological and developmental studies but even then, usually in the negative sense, describing the consequences of poor or absent fathering. Topics such as fathering skills and the benefits of good fathering have been neglected and need to be emphasized. I will discuss how to further integrate topics of fatherhood into the curriculum using research, activities, and other resources.

Note: **The * indicates the session chairperson.**

Thursday, March 30, 2006

Lunch: ***12:30 – 2:15 p.m.***

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Ellen Pastorino

"Being Learning-Centered: The Inclusive Classroom"

Speaker Courtesy of
Thomson Learning

SESSION 6: 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

RM 1: PANEL PRESENTATIONS

When You're Thrown to the Lions: Building TA Confidence
Paige Brazy, Autumn Hostetter, & Hayley Shilling, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI

Our aim in this session is to facilitate discussion that will encourage and empower teaching assistants and new instructors to gain confidence by trusting in their own past knowledge and professional experiences. We will present three examples of how we, as new TA's, have done this using our backgrounds of graduate study in social psychology, cognitive psychology, and counseling psychology. We will demonstrate a classroom activity that can be adapted to accommodate a range of instructors' experiences and interests. Incorporating what you know into your teaching helps build your confidence, which is a key resource as a beginning instructor.

RM 2: ROUNDTABLE PRESENTATIONS

Using Case Studies and Debates to Teach Abnormal Psychology
Mary Streit, Suffolk Community College, NY

This roundtable discussion will look at using active learning exercises in teaching an abnormal psychology class. Participants are encouraged to bring with them exercises that they have used in the classroom to engage students. In particular, I will discuss how to use case studies as a method to teach the course materials. Actual samples from the course will be presented, along with a discussion of how this allows the students to apply their learning. In addition, using debates in the classroom as a means of encouraging both active learning and critical thinking in abnormal psychology will be discussed.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

SESSION 7: 3:45-4:45 p.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

An Innovative Course Design in Adaptive Thinking
Michelle Wojtaszek, Marist College, NY

This presentation outlines an undergraduate course that emphasizes components necessary to the development of an adaptive thinking style. The course material includes cognitive mechanisms that contribute to restricted thinking and several other relevant topic areas. The value of this course rests on its broad and practical applicability to all areas of psychology, as well as to wider contexts. Adaptive and innovative thinking processes are vital for scientific advancement, and central to the effective reduction of prejudice and bias. The course will offer tools a student can find valuable for a lifetime, not just for the span of the course itself.

The Assessment of Former College Students
Edward J. Murray & Carol A. Murray*, Kent State University Ashtabula, OH

This research examines the relationship between a college education and career goals and achievements. This presentation has a three-fold purpose. The discussion will point out the obvious relationship between the Taxonomy of Student Outcomes and the field of Education. During the presentation, many outcomes in the taxonomy will be highlighted to show how these goals influenced the outcomes for former college students. Finally, the data will show positive achievements for students (N=677), although the majority of the sample have not completed a four year degree.

RM 2: WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

Why It Is Better to be a Guide on the Side Than A Sage On The Stage
Charles A. LaJeunesse, College Misericordia, PA

This presentation will provide participants with a comparison of cooperative and collaborative learning, research on cooperative learning, information on quiz-quiz, a cooperative learning approach developed by the presenter and a simulation of this procedure so that you may adopt or adapt it to your own courses.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

<u>RECEPTION:</u> 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.
(INCLUDING WINE & BEER
ON THE HOUSE)

<u>Dinner:</u> 6:30 p.m.

<u>After Dinner:</u> Hospitality Room

Friday, March 31, 2006

BREAKFAST: 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

SESSION 8: 9:30-10:45 a.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Learning by Doing: Teaching Introductory Psychology
Caroline Olko, Nassau Community College, NY

Teaching General Psychology classes for many years, I have found that the best way for students to master course content is through active learning. Active learning involves students *doing something and thinking about* what they are doing. These activities frequently involve critical and creative thinking, areas students find challenging. Students take a participatory role in learning rather than adopting a receptive, passive posture. After taking a seminar in *active learning*, I have developed a portfolio of some of these techniques. They include, though are not limited to, the following: critical skill exercises, group collaboration, journal keeping, media analysis, and role playing.

It Takes a Village: Mnemonics as General Psychology
Jonathan Springer*, Kean University, NJ

This interactive oral presentation demonstrates the enhancement of learning in General Psychology courses through the use of mnemonics. Using well-understood processes of cognition and newer understanding from an evolutionary perspective, a course can be constructed around mnemonic principles and techniques. Built around the classical mnemonic, the method of loci, other mnemonic techniques are utilized in teaching the 10 classical sub-areas of general psychology. "It Takes a Village" also examines sex differences in mnemonic usage.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

RM 2: PANEL PRESENTATIONS

Does Online Technology Facilitate Learning for Psychology Students
James Regan, Maureen Kavanaugh, Heather Pierson, Beth Maffia, Lauren Richmond, & Mona Vosoughi, Marist College, NY

The use of both technology and the Internet to heighten student interest and learning has been a goal of many colleges and universities. In terms of learning, the use of online courses as a substitute for the classroom experience has met with mixed results (Eppler and Ironsmith, 2004; Mabry, et al, 2004). We will present results from two studies designed to evaluate learning facilitation and satisfaction from psychology students at two different colleges.

Coffee: 10:45 – 11:15 a.m.

SESSION 9: 11:15 – 12:30 p.m.

RM 1: ORAL PRESENTATIONS

The Element of Surprise? Unannounced vs. Announced Quizzes
David J. Bennett, Northpark University, IL, Geoffrey F.W. Turner, Simmons College, RI, & Robert R. Zimmerman, Northpark University, IL

How do we get our students to consistently work through course material? Should we assume they prepare for each class by reviewing past material? Do periodic quizzes encourage distributed rather than massed practice? What is the optimal way to deliver such quizzes? Should such quizzes be regularly scheduled so students know when to prepare for them or unannounced so students are never quite sure when they will occur? Which is more predictive of course material mastery? Data from over twenty-five courses are examined in an attempt to answer these questions.

Mastery Quizzes as Signaling Devices
Jeffrey S. Nevid* & Julianna Blitzer, St. John's University, NY

In this presentation I will describe a new signaling technique called mastery quizzing. It is used to cue student attention to important lecture material and secondarily to provide an incentive for regular classroom attendance.

Note: The * indicates the session chairperson.

RM 2: PANEL PRESENTATION

Psychology and Beyond: The Interdisciplinary Dimensions of the Discipline
Roberta T. Paley, FIT, SUNY, NY, Joseph H. Moskowitz, New Jersey City University, NJ, and Yuniya Kawamura & Paul Clement, FIT, SUNY, NY

Interdisciplinary courses and studies are recognized in academia as a means of breaking down discipline barriers and fostering new fields of knowledge. Some claim that the traditional divisions among the disciplines are artificial and that they limit innovation and inquiry. In this presentation we will look at how psychology is infused in other disciplines and how other disciplines are infused within psychology. Four speakers, each from a different field, discuss psychology in interdisciplinary teaching.

Lunch: 12:30 p.m.

Conference Committee:

Gene Indenbaum, Chairperson

Judith R. Levine, Program Subcommittee Chairperson
Joyce Hemphill, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Laura Scheinholtz, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Jacqueline Nguyen, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Marilyn Blumenthal, Conference Program Editor & Keynote Speaker Person

Barbara Sarringer, Executive Assistant

Teaching Child Cognitive Development through Chekhov's Story *Grisha*

Anna Toom, Ph.D.

Touro College, NY

Cognitive development in the transition period from infancy to early childhood is one of the most intricate aspects of teaching Child Psychology. Scholars point out an objective difficulty in studying 2-3 year olds. Textbooks do not sufficiently cover this period. This complicates the teachers' work and makes it harder for students – especially the younger and inexperienced ones – to comprehend the theoretical ideas.

The short story *Grisha* written by Anton Chekhov is a unique illustration of a 2-year 8-month-old boy's cognitive functioning. It can be effectively used in teaching the topic. This story contains vivid and detailed descriptions of how a boy having first seen the world outside of his nursery room perceives new objects and people, copes with unusual experiences, communicates, thinks, forms concepts, and develops a categorical structure essential for his further understanding of reality.

When I work with the story in the classroom, I do so in 3 stages which together last approximately 3 hours. First, I familiarize the students with major theoretical ideas and standards of development for this age. Then, they read the story, analyze the character's thoughts and actions, and give written answers to questions about his development. This is a sample of questions that the teacher may ask: *How can you characterize Grisha's perception? Has Grisha developed object permanence? Is Grisha's speech developed adequately for his age?* It is important to require students to support their answers with all possible episodes from the text. Finally, after an individual assignment is done, we discuss the story as well as students' answers and analyses.

Instructor's major tasks, as I see them, are: (a) To provide the students with valid theoretical statements and standards of development that serve as objective criteria for evaluation of the story's character; (b) To encourage the students to make objective conclusions based on comparisons of the character's behaviors with the given criteria; (c) To organize a group discussion that stimulates the participants to make collaborative decisions. In my experience, students working only individually usually do not find complete correct answers to the questions, while a cooperating group of students does.

Most students enrolled in my 12 courses (297 out of 303) characterized the story as "making the topic real" and "helping to grasp abstract psychological concepts." When commenting on the educational value of the assignment, they often write that the story gives them a great opportunity "to look at the world through a child's eyes." According to the most popular opinion, an analysis of the story helps to understand better why children's ignored need for communication may cause a delay in their cognitive development.

Jeopardy in the Classroom: "I'll Take Archetypes for 300, Alex"

Dante Mancini, Ph.D.

Herman Huber, Ph.D.

College of Saint Elizabeth, NJ

Perhaps one of the more challenging tasks in the teaching of psychology is determining how to stimulate student interest during in-class review sessions for upcoming examinations. Traditionally, these sessions can quickly become repetitive and dull for well-prepared students, while overwhelming and ultimately unproductive for ill-prepared students. However, we have used a method of increasing student interest and incentive for examination review that involves team cooperation and competition, and with the aid of modern technology, is also exciting and downright fun.

The authors will discuss the use of non-traditional learning tools, and demonstrate the use of a highly interactive Jeopardy-style TV game show software program, as a method of in-class review for examinations. Attendees at the presentation will have an opportunity to actually participate in a game and gain first-hand experience.

In a typical game, the class is divided into four teams, with one team captain per team responsible for buzzing in for his or her team on a computer keyboard. In each round, the teams choose questions from six categories and five point values within each category. Points are awarded to the first team to answer a question correctly, while points are deducted for incorrect answers. Ideally, question difficulty should increase with point value. After one or more rounds of 30 questions each, the teams may then compete in one last round of "Final Jeopardy," strategically wagering points on their ability to answer the final question correctly.

Presently the authors have successfully used the software in both personality theory and learning and memory courses. However, the software is completely customizable; all categories, questions, and answers may be devised to suit any psychology course. In addition, questions can be made more interesting through the use of images and audio clips placed directly into the software, as is done in the real Jeopardy game.

Following the exams for which the software was used for review in five courses, the authors assessed students' opinions on the effectiveness of the software using five-point Likert-type scales in a brief questionnaire. Almost universally, they love it. Staff members down the hall have asked what all the screaming was about in our classrooms. The vast majority of students rated the Jeopardy game as "extremely useful," "extremely fun," "extremely helpful in learning the material," and encouraged the use of the software again for examination review in future courses.

The authors will also discuss additional ideas for increasing the interest in the game. For example, we have used small prizes such as Freud Museum pencils or buttons to increase incentive in a personality theory course. Other "prizes" have also been especially successful, such as giving extra points on the examination for all members of the winning team.

Pretest Study Sessions

- Student involvement in traditional pretest study sessions is typically lacking
- However, pretest study sessions that organize material help students perform better on exams compared to unstructured question-and-answer sessions (Aamodt, 1982a, 1982b)
- Nontraditional instructional methods such as game show-style study sessions more actively involve students and are perceived as fun (Benek-Rivera & Mathews, 2004)

Previous Papers on Game Show-Style Study Session Formats

- Previous authors have described non-computerized game show-style study sessions in various psychology courses:
- Physiological psychology (Ackil, 1986)
- Abnormal psychology (Keutzer, 1993)
- Research methods (Gibson, 1991)

Previous Papers on Game Show-Style Study Session Formats

•Other "higher tech" authors have described *Jeopardy*-style games for other disciplines:

–Using PowerPoint for physiology courses (Rodenbaugh, Collins, & DiCarlo, 2002)

–Using a Web page and HTML editor for chemistry courses (Campbell & Muzyka, 2002)

The Game: Equipment Needed

•Desktop or laptop computer with speakers

•Ultimate QuizShow software (purchased from DEC Software at www.decsoftware.com)

•One or two extra keyboards

•Y-Key Key dual keyboard adapter (manufactured by PI Engineering at www.ymouse.com)

•LCD projector

•A good sense of humor

Freud Prizes!

The Game: Procedure

•Based on the television game show *Jeopardy*

•Create at least one round of 30 questions, divided into six categories

•Divide class into two to four teams

•Each team selects a captain to buzz in

•Teams compete for points:

–Correct answer wins points

–Incorrect or no answer loses points

How is it received by students?

•Our students almost invariably report enjoying the *Jeopardy*-style game review sessions

•We followed up four *Jeopardy* sessions with a six-item questionnaire

Questionnaire Results (n = 52)

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Teaching and Confronting the "ISMS:" A Hands-on Workshop

Charles L. Richman, Ph.D., Emeritus

Wake Forest University, NC

Teaching interdisciplinary undergraduate psychology courses that deal with contemporary and historic "isms", with an emphasis on psychological theory and data, is both an exciting and a challenging venture. This " hands-on-workshop" will aid instructors in their development courses that are designed to explore and ameliorate the "isms". The workshop may also help instructors and facilitators integrate this information into their existing courses.

This workshop is aimed at creating curriculum that informs students of the value of social, emotional and clinical problems created by harboring racist and homophobic attitudes. One primary objective of courses that deal with the "isms" is to encourage students to investigate, in depth, political decrees, legislative decisions, organized public efforts and presentations by the media that encourage or reduce the intensity of the "isms". Social, political, physiological/genetic, cross-cultural, developmental, cognitive, motivational/emotional, personality, educational psychology, economic, political and biological research and theory are integral aspects of the courses faculty may design. Conveying an understanding that altering our "isms" and those of others requires both our cognitive and emotional energies.

Three textbooks are suggested, one on racism, one on heterosexism and one on other "isms," for example, religious intolerance, ethnocentrism, sexism, etc. Furthermore, readings that identify the many positive contributions to humanity of women, African American, Asian American, American Indian, Hispanic, lesbian and gay individuals are stressed.

Incorporating student and guest presentations, documentary films ("Out of the Past", "Its' Elementary", "Eyes on the Prize", etc.), group discussions/lectures, as well as experiential sessions are essential aspects of this learning experience. The course is taught in a three hour block once a week plus the unlearning racism/heterosexism experiential 6-hour session. The latter 6-hour evening begins with the similarity-difference session, followed by the documentary (Lee Mun Wah's, "Color of Fear"), then an exercise on the way we distance ourselves from dealing with the "isms", White & Heterosexual Privilege, learning about our own racism/heterosexism and how the "isms" support our nation economically, religiously as well as our social institutions, and political parties.

Convention participants will sample this experiential session. A written outline of strategies and specific tactics of teaching courses concerned with the "isms" will be provided for each faculty participant.

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Using an Electronic Portfolio System in Program Evaluation

Patricia A. Oswald, Ph.D.

Katherine Zaromatidis, Ph.D.

Iona College, NY

This paper will review the use of an electronic portfolio system in evaluating goals and performance outcomes in the psychology curriculum. Specifically, the following will be discussed: (a) the need for program evaluation; (b) the development of learning goals and performance outcomes; (c) how these goals and performance outcomes are evaluated, (d) the development of an evaluation rubric to use with an electronic portfolio system, including a review of the rubric and a typical assignment that has been used; and (e) the specifics of an electronic portfolio system (Task Stream).

Program Evaluation

For some time in our country there has been wide-spread concern about education at all levels, and increasing pressure for accountability to stakeholders regarding the quality of teaching and learning. Increasingly, colleges and universities are asked to provide evidence that students are successfully mastering the goals and performance outcomes adopted by their schools. In psychology, the major stakeholders in this endeavor include students, faculty, college administration, accrediting bodies, and policy makers. Information gleaned from effective program evaluation can provide students and future employers with a clear set of expectations about the knowledge and skills of psychology majors, can help to articulate criteria for education and training guidelines in psychology, and can help shape national expectations for assessing undergraduate education. As research and assessment experts, arguably, psychologists should take a lead role in this effort. Moreover, at Iona, there is a college-wide initiative to

strengthen programs, seek accreditation by external bodies (e.g., NASP, NCATE), and make more explicit the knowledge and skill set of our graduates.

Developing Learning Goals

Two initial criteria were set by Iona's psychology department in developing learning goals. The first criterion was that the goals be congruent with the department's Mission Statement and the second criterion was to use the APA undergraduate teaching and learning goals as a model in developing our own goals. The American Psychological Associate's *Task Force on Undergraduate Psychology Major Competencies* (APA, 2002) developed 10 goals and 49 related learning competencies, which are summarized below.

APA Goals

Goal 1: Knowledge Base of Psychology (content areas and major perspectives)

Goal 2: Research Methods in Psychology (research methods, statistical analysis)

Goal 3: Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology (critical mind, effective problem-solving)

Goal 4: Application of Psychology (application of theory, areas of psychology)

Goal 5: Values in Psychology (act ethically, respect diversity)

Goal 6: Information and Technological Literacy (computer and web-based skills)

Goal 7: Communication Skills (written, oral, quantitative literacy)

Goal 8: Sociocultural and International Awareness (sociocultural influences)

Goal 9: Personal Development (metacognition, personal/professional values and goals)

Goal 10: Career Planning and Development (occupational pursuits)

After reviewing the APA goals, two additional criteria emerged: (1) create fewer than ten goals and (2) make our undergraduate goals consistent with our graduate goals. The

department developed six learning goals and 29 related learning outcomes, which are summarized below.

Iona College Psychology Department Goals

Goal I: The competent bachelor's level psychology candidate is knowledgeable about research methods, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation, and is able to use computers and information technology for many purposes. Eight related performance outcomes fall under this goal.

Goal II: The competent bachelor's level psychology candidate utilizes scientific thinking, critically analyzes information, and engages in creative problem solving to derive insight into and facilitate the growth of their own, and others' cognitive and emotional processes. Seven related performance outcomes fall under this goal.

Goal III: The competent bachelor's level psychology candidate recognizes, understands, and respects the complexity of diversity. Three related performance outcomes fall under this goal.

Goal IV: The competent bachelor's level psychology candidate is knowledgeable about the ways psychological principles can be applied in various real-world settings and careers. Five related performance outcomes fall under this goal.

Goal V: The competent bachelor's level psychology candidate demonstrates a knowledge base of psychology and an appropriate value system in applying this knowledge base. Three related performance outcomes fall under this goal.

Goal VI: The competent bachelor's level psychology candidate is an effective communicator. Three related performance outcomes fall under this goal.

Evaluating the Goals

At Iona, we decided to use an electronic system as one way in which to evaluate the program goals. We selected Task Stream, which is a comprehensive electronic system that can be used to evaluate educational programs. The specifics of Task Stream will be discussed later in this paper. In order to use Task Stream for this competency-based assessment, a standardized evaluation rubric, which corresponded to each learning goal, was needed. The department decided to use a scale for our rubric that roughly corresponds with our 5-point grading system: 0 (*F*), 1 (*D*), 2 (*C*), 3 (*B*), 4 (*A*). Specific criteria were developed to correspond to each goal. The rubrics for competencies related to each learning goal are provided below.

Rubric for Competencies Related to Research/Technology Goal (I):

Value 0:

- Failure to meet even the most minimal passing standard related to this goal.

Value 1:

- Deficient in knowledge and understanding of statistics, research, and evaluation methods.
- Lacking in ability to plan and implement systematic processes for data collection and analysis.
- Deficient in knowledge of information sources and relevant technology.

Value 2:

- Demonstrates minimally acceptable knowledge and understanding of statistics, research, and evaluation methods.
- Has minimal ability to plan and implement systematic processes for collecting and analyzing data.
- Has minimally acceptable knowledge of information sources and relevant technology.

Value 3:

- Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of statistics, research, and evaluation methods.
- Has ability to plan and implement systematic processes for collecting and analyzing data.
- Has knowledge of information sources and relevant technology.

Value 4:

- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and thorough understanding of statistics, research, and evaluation methods.
- Demonstrates outstanding ability to plan and implement systematic processes for data collection and analysis.
- Has comprehensive knowledge of information sources and relevant technology.

Rubric for Competencies Related to Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving Goal (II):

Value 0:

- Failure to meet even the most minimal passing standard related to this goal.

Value 1:

- Deficient in knowledge and understanding of cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial processes.
- Deficient in ability to utilize scientific thinking, critically analyze information, and engage in creative problem solving.

Value 2:

- Demonstrates minimally acceptable knowledge and understanding of cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial processes.
- Demonstrates minimal ability to utilize scientific thinking, critically analyze information, and engage in creative problem solving.

Value 3:

- Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial processes.
- Demonstrates ability to utilize scientific thinking, critically analyze information, and engage in creative problem solving.

Value 4:

- Demonstrates outstanding ability to utilize scientific thinking, critically analyze information, and engage in creative problem solving.
- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and thorough understanding of cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial processes.

Rubric for Competencies Related to Diversity Goal (III):

Value 0:

- Failure to meet even the most minimal passing standard related to this goal.

Value 1:

- Demonstrates little or no awareness of individual differences, abilities, and disabilities.
- Does not understand the influence of biological, psychological, and sociological factors and the interaction of these factors.
- Lacks sensitivity and skills needed to work with diverse individuals.

Value 2:

- Demonstrates minimal knowledge of individual differences, abilities, and disabilities.
- Has minimally acceptable understanding of the influence of biological, psychological, and sociological factors and interactions of these factors.

- Demonstrates minimally acceptable sensitivity and skills needed to work with diverse individuals

Value 3:

- Demonstrates knowledge of individual differences, abilities, and disabilities.
- Understands the influence of biological, psychological, and sociological factors and interactions of these factors.
- Demonstrates sensitivity and skills needed to work with diverse individuals.

Value 4:

- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of individual differences, abilities, and disabilities.
- Has thorough understanding of the influence of biological, psychological, and sociological factors and of the interaction of these factors.
- Demonstrates outstanding sensitivity and skills when working with diverse individuals.

Rubric for Competencies Related to Application of Psychology Goal (IV):

Value 0:

- Failure to meet even the most minimal passing standard related to this goal.

Value 1:

- Lacks the ability to apply knowledge of psychological principles, theories, and research findings to everyday experiences, related to self and others.
- Lacks understanding of the types of academic experiences and performance in psychology that will facilitate entry into the work force, graduate-level education, or both.
- Lacks knowledge of the ways that psychological principles can be ethically applied to solving real-world problems.

Value 2:

- Demonstrates minimal ability to apply knowledge of psychological principles, theories, and research findings to everyday experiences, related to self and others.
- Demonstrates minimal understanding of the types of academic experiences and performance in psychology that will facilitate entry into the work force, graduate-level education, or both.
- Has minimal knowledge of the ways that psychological principles can be ethically applied to solving real-world problems.

Value 3:

- Demonstrates the ability to apply knowledge of psychological principles, theories, and research findings to everyday experiences, related to self and others.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the types of academic experiences and performance in psychology that will facilitate entry into the work force, graduate-level education, or both.
- Has knowledge of the ways that psychological principles can be ethically applied to solving real-world problems.

Value 4:

- Demonstrates exceptional ability to apply knowledge of psychological principles, theories, and research findings to everyday experiences, related to self and others.
- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the types of academic experiences and performance in psychology that will facilitate entry into the work force, graduate-level education, or both.
- Has comprehensive knowledge of the ways that psychological principles can be ethically applied to solving real-world problems.

Rubric for Competencies Related to Knowledge Base/Ethics Goal (V):

Value 0:

- Failure to meet even the most minimal passing standard related to this goal.

Value 1:

- Has meager knowledge of the history and foundations of the profession.
- Deficient in understanding of and compliance with ethical, professional, and legal standards in psychology.

Value 2:

- Has minimally acceptable knowledge of the history and foundations of the profession.
- Demonstrates minimally acceptable understanding of and compliance with ethical, professional, and legal standards in psychology.

Value 3:

- Has knowledge of the history and foundations of the profession.
- Shows understanding of and compliance with ethical, professional, and legal standards in psychology.

Value 4:

- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of the history and foundations of the profession.
- Has thorough understanding of and consistently complies with ethical, professional, and legal standards in psychology.

Rubric for Competencies Related to Communication Goal (VI):

Value 0:

- Failure to meet even the most minimal passing standard related to this goal.

Value 1:

- Does not present ideas in a logical and thoughtful manner.
- In written communication, demonstrates many deficiencies in following APA style and format.
- In written communication, makes many errors in grammar, punctuation, and syntax.
- In oral communication, has poor diction, makes little or no eye contact, and often reads material word-for-word.
- In oral communication, uses visual aids ineffectively, incorrectly, or not at all.

Value 2:

- Has minimally acceptable ability to present ideas in a logical and thoughtful manner.
- In written communication, follows APA style and format some of the time but not consistently.
- In written communication, makes errors in grammar, punctuation, and syntax.
- In oral communication, demonstrates minimally acceptable ability to present material.
- In oral communication, demonstrates a minimally acceptable ability to use visual aids appropriately.

Value 3:

- Usually presents material in a logical and thoughtful manner.
- In written communication, follows APA style and format most of the time.
- In written communication, makes few errors in grammar, punctuation, and syntax.
- In oral communication, presents material effectively with good diction and eye contact.
- In oral communication, uses visual aids appropriately.

Value 4:

- Always presents ideas in a logical and thoughtful manner.
- In written communication, consistently follows APA style and format.
- In written communication, consistently uses correct grammar, punctuation, and syntax.
- In oral communication, presents material very effectively with excellent diction and eye contact.
- In oral communication, consistently uses visual aids very effectively and appropriately.

Applying the Rubric to the Electronic Assignment

Each rubric is specifically written to correspond to the six goals and their related performance outcomes. However, not all goals and rubrics will be relevant to each assignment. Faculty members select one course assignment to be uploaded to Task Stream. They identify the two or three goals that are most relevant to the course assignment. Students submit the assignment (usually in hard copy and in electronic form via Task Stream) and faculty evaluate it in Task Stream using the rubric for each goal.

Sample Assignment

In my *Social Psychology* course, the oral presentation is designated as the Task Stream assignment. Students summarize and critique an assigned journal article. They are required to use PowerPoint in the presentation. The goals that are relevant to this assignment are Goals I, V, and VI. The related rubrics are then used to assess the work. Faculty are also able to make specific comments on the work.

Task Stream

Increasingly colleges and universities are asked to provide evidence showing that students are successfully mastering the goals and performance outcomes adopted by their

schools. One way to meet this expectation is with the development of student portfolios, which can showcase a student's work over the course of his/her academic career.

Task Stream is an electronic folio assessment system being used by the psychology department at Iona College. This system allows one to use goals and performance outcomes in evaluating assignments. Individual student proficiency is assessed and student work can be archived. There are advantages and disadvantages to using portfolios for this purpose.

One advantage of using a portfolio for student assessment is that the expectations for each and every submission are very explicit. Not only are assignments described in detail, but the criteria used for grading are also made clear. Students receive detailed instructions pertaining to the assignments that must be submitted for various courses. Students are also told how their assignments will be graded, and they have access to the grading rubrics used by the professors. This takes the "guess-work" out of the process allowing both student and professor to communicate more clearly in terms of expectations.

The psychology department of Iona College requires students to make submissions to their portfolios throughout their academic careers. One advantage associated with this requirement is that students and faculty are able to see student growth and development. As students progress in their academic careers, submissions to their portfolios become more involved, complex documents. For example, students submit term papers for various courses early on, but as they progress in the psychology major they are asked to submit an original empirical study that involves designing a study around a topic of interest, gathering data, analyzing data, and writing an APA formatted paper.

Students can also use their portfolios upon graduation to showcase their skills for prospective employers and/or graduate schools. Having work samples from all stages of

schooling can be a great advantage when seeking employment or entrance to a graduate program. Not only does it distinguish our students from other applicants who supply only a resume, but it also allows the student to show their best work.

The advantages of using portfolio assessment are not limited to the students. One major advantage for our department is that data from student evaluations can be used for program evaluation and improvement. The portfolio requirement was instituted by the department as a way of gathering data regarding student achievement of departmental goals and performance outcomes. Each portfolio assignment assesses certain departmental goals and performance outcomes. Thus, data can be aggregated across courses and/or goals, allowing the department to make improvements in areas where student performance falls short.

One significant initiative at Iona College currently is the accreditation of various programs. Portfolio assessments can assist in this process. The electronic portfolio system used by the department, Task Stream, allows for data storage. This is a great advantage as many accrediting bodies want to see several years' worth of data. Also as mentioned previously, through Task Stream one is able to aggregate data across semesters, courses, or goals/performance outcomes, significantly reducing the amount of work required when submitting for accreditation.

There are some disadvantages associated with the use of portfolios. Because the department uses an electronic portfolio system, there is some monetary cost associated with this assessment. The cost is to the student, not the college. In addition, the system must be set up and maintained. The initial set-up can be labor intensive, but maintenance is fairly simple. Of course once the system is in place all professors have to be trained to use it. However, it should

be noted that the psychology department has had this assessment in place for approximately one and one half years and the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

Attitude Change after Seminar on Homelessness: Causes and Consequences

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A short-form scale of public attitudes toward homelessness (PATH) was developed by Guzewicz and Takooshian (1992) in order to assess and chart changes of public opinion toward homelessness. Reacting to society in the 1980's and a backlash against homelessness, the scale was created so that verifiable records of public attitudes could be used by social leaders to reach out to the disadvantaged and change public policy.

One approach to changing public attitudes and behavior is through courses which attempt to increase students' awareness of the causes and consequences of homelessness and to introduce them to the work of justice as well as charity. Would a seminar on Homelessness: Causes and Consequences change the attitudes of the students toward people who are homeless? We hypothesized that it would.

Method

Participants

Participants were 19 undergraduate students (12 female and seven male) between the ages of 19-22 and one female auditor enrolled in PJ125 Homelessness: Causes and Consequences in Fall, 2004 at Fairfield University. Sixteen students provided surveys coded with the same ID number at the beginning and end of the course; these were used in the analysis.

Seminar: Students used theory, field experiences, reflection, and critical analysis to broaden and deepen their understanding of homelessness and people who are homeless. Issues of race, gender and class were addressed as they occur within and contribute to this population. The

causes and consequences of homelessness were discussed from a variety of perspectives, with particular emphasis on ethics, social justice, and mental, physical, psychological and spiritual health. We discussed the effects of homelessness on individuals, families, and society, and considered dimensions of charity and justice.

Each week there were three hours of seminar, in which students were expected to participate actively, and three hours of field placements in shelters, soup kitchens, and transitional housing outside of class periods which were required as part of the homework. During seminars we shared our experiences in field placements, discussed journal reflections, readings, and videotapes, heard a variety of guest speakers, and integrated field experiences with theory through discussions, weekly Critical Reflection Papers, and other assignments. Field placements included shelters, soup kitchens, child care centers, and drop-in centers. Students did a Final Team Project which they presented in class and to others.

Books assigned included:

*Grisham, J. (1998). *The street lawyer*. New York: Doubleday.

*Kennedy, M. (2005). *Without a net: Middle class and homeless (with kids) in America: My story*. New York:Viking.

Roberts, J. J. (2004). *How to increase homelessness*. Bend, Oregon: Loyal Publishing.

Shulman, B (2003). *The Betrayal of Work*. New York: The New Press.

*Smith, G.N., (2002) *Radical compassion: Finding Christ in the heart of the poor*. Chicago:Loyola Press.

Wright, J. D., Rubin, B.A., & Devine, J.A. (1998) *Beside the golden door*. NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

Videos included:

It Was a Wonderful Llife

Dark Side of the Moon

Gospel According to Mr. Allen

Ironweed

Shelter Stories

Almost Home

The Begging Game

Reaching Home

Just Another Day in Paradise

We invited speakers:

A formerly homeless woman

Economics of poverty & homelessness

Supportive Housing

We did Experiencing Poverty Exercises:

$10/week, plastic bag, no car, no cell phone, toiletries, eating restrictions

We held a Pleasantville Town Meeting (Kids can Make a Difference):

Participatory exercise, roles and the Final Team Project involved consciousness-raising and a presentation to an outside group.

Materials

Within Guzewicz and Takooshian's 20-item short-form scale of public attitudes toward homelessness were five questions called the PATH scale. An additional item ("Cities should enact a law making it a crime for homeless people to beg for money in the subways") from the article was utilized as question number six, plus three additional questions ("How much of a

problem would you say there is today in this nation, of homeless people having to live on the street?" "Would you say the size of the homeless problem in this nation is growing?" "How often do you see a homeless person?"). People responded by making a vertical mark on a horizontal line below each question with numbers from 1-5, with "Strongly disagree" above the 1 and "Strongly agree" above the 5. PATH scores were computed such that attitudes sympathetic toward people who are homeless were represented by larger numbers. A second questionnaire, The Homeless (TH), was a one-item scale created from a statement written by a former PJ125 student stressing social responsibility. "No longer will l refer to homeless people as "the homeless." It is obvious to me that in subtle ways society objectifies homeless people so that [we] do not have to deal with the moral and ethical implications of the fact that our system perpetuates this problem. It is easier for those with power and money to ignore the problem than to face the fact that they might be part of the cause of homelessness. ... therefore I am also responsible for trying to rectify this situation."

Results

PATH means for the beginning of the semester (M= 3.52, SD= .33) and for the end of the semester (M= 3.8, SD= .28) were compared using a one-way ANOVA. The comparison showed a significant change in students' PATH scores, $F(15)=6.55$, p= .02.

TH scores for the beginning of the semester (M= 4.12, SD= .10) were compared with TH scores for the end of the semester (M= 4.78, SD= .35), and a significant change in students' TH scores was found, $F(15)= 5.86$, p= .02.

Discussion

The data supported our hypothesis that this seminar could change students' attitudes toward people who are homeless in the direction of increased understanding of the multiple

causes of homelessness and the responsibility of society to address, not ignore, homelessness. Knowledge of the effects of homelessness and awareness of causes of homelessness were increased after taking this seminar. As students became more aware and educated about the causes and consequences of homelessness, their attitudes toward people who are homeless became more understanding and empathetic, which, we hope, might be the critical first step toward working to change those societal factors that result in people being homeless.

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www.kidscanmakeadifference.org Pleasantville Town Meeting

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Going Deep: First Observations on Teaching Deep Process Studying

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The under-prepared student often suffers from several deficits in college. One of the biggest is learning effective study habits. As my prior work at Morrisville has demonstrated, students do not study very much or very effectively. In past semesters, most students reported studying about 1.5 - 3 hours per unit test (one given approximately every three weeks) (data presented at TOP 17 and 18), and the most common studying technique reported by students was reviewing their notes (data presented at TOP 18). As may be expected, grades on exams were less than stellar, with mean student performance on exams hovering between C- and C.

Research has repeatedly demonstrated the superiority of deep processing techniques over rote memorization for retention of material. Deep processing refers to using higher order thinking about concepts (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Weiten, 2002, cites Craik & Tulving, 1975, Koriat & Melkman, 1987, and Lockhart & Craik, 1990 as studies showing the superiority of deep processing over rote memorization.) My main research focus has been on how to get students to switch from rote memorization studying to a deeper processing approach.

I focus on elaboration as the main technique for creating deep processing. Elaboration is thinking *about* the material, rather than simply memorizing it. Past efforts on my part to get students to adopt this technique have not generally been useful, possibly because I had tried to convince students to use it through didactic means, rather than treating elaboration as an example of learning a new skill.

My only real success in getting students to use elaboration was in a series of assignments that were handed in for grades. Having students write “minipapers,” where they focus on a single,

specific concept, write a definition, and provide an example they have observed, does improve student performance on related questions on their final exam (Data presented at TOP 19). But while the minipaper assignment is effective, it would be difficult to expand, given the sheer volume of grading that would be required. A different method is required.

The Linked Introduction to Psychology and Practical Study Skills Courses

Elaboration processing should therefore be taught as a skill, and given typical student habits, it probably needs to be a required assignment. Fortunately, I have an unusual opportunity at Morrisville State College to test new teaching methods. One section of my Introduction to Psychology course each fall semester is set aside and linked to a section of Practical Study Skills, a one-credit hour course that is designed to provide additional support to students who could presumably do better in college if they were shown how. The two courses are co-requisites, meaning students must enroll in both to be in either. Enrollment is capped at twenty students rather than thirty-five, and between the two courses, I have four 50-minute blocks a week, instead of the three that Intro Psych normally has. Students do not enroll in these courses normally, but are placed in them by the dean. The dean's criterion is that students should "be able to benefit from the course," presumably meaning they are performing below their perceived potential at Morrisville State.

An advantage of having these two courses linked is that I can assess the effectiveness of the Study Skills instruction by observing student performance in Introduction to Psychology. I can also measure the effectiveness of the study skills course by comparing student performance across sections of Intro Psych.

The psychology content of these linked courses is the same as that provided in my other sections of Intro Psych.

Method and Results

I have taught the combined Study Skills/Introduction to Psych courses twice. The first time (Fall, 2004) I taught a variety of things that would presumably address student motivation and performance. Students were introduced to such concepts as keeping track of their goals, both long-term and short term; taking better notes in class; setting a regular schedule; and test taking skills for both multiple choice and essay tests. Elaborative studying was introduced about half way through the semester, when memory was covered in the Intro Psych part of the course. While this fit conceptually—students could hopefully see why deeper processing would lead to superior test performance over rote memorization—results did not indicate any real changes in student performance. Mean test scores for study skills students were 63.9, and for regular intro psych students that same semester, 67.9. While there was considerable variation in scores from test to test, the study skills students essentially started off behind regular students and stayed there. Had the lesson on elaborative studying been successful, there should have been an improvement either for test 3 or 4. It is possible to argue that students adopted elaborative studying for the final exam, accounting for a decrease in the difference between sections, but that seems unlikely, given the steady decline in mean score before that. In any case, the results fell far short of what I had hoped for the course.

As noted in the introduction, I believe the main problem was in the use of didactic methods to teach a skill. For my second time with the course, Fall 2005, I decided to approach teaching elaborative studying as a skill. My objectives were to bring student grades in the study skills section to be at least comparable to those of students in my regular Intro Psych classes and possibly even to surpass them, to get students to be able to use these study skills on their own

without an instructor present, and with luck, to get students to adopt these techniques to other courses at their own initiative.

To teach studying as a skill, I adopted the following guidelines.

1. Elaborative studying needed to be practiced in the classroom, not simply left as homework.
2. I needed to observe studying and offer feedback and guidance on how to do it.
3. Students should work in groups: the group format would encourage students to use elaboration in order to teach concepts to each other, and group members could provide social support and social pressures to improve studying and grades.

I borrowed the idea of learning groups from Aronson's Jigsaw Classroom idea. (Myers, 2004, references Aronson, Blaney, et al., 1978). Students in Aronson's jigsaw groups did not have enough information to complete their assignments without the rest of the group, so group members needed to work together to for anybody to get good grades. Imitating Aronson, I took the key concepts students needed to know from each unit, and divided them up among group members. If each group member were responsible for teaching his or her concepts to the rest of the group, then each group member would have to understand at least the concepts they had to teach better than they would have if they merely studied it. Group members could cooperate in making sure that everybody mastered all of the concepts.

I waited until after the first exam before assigning students to study groups. First, I wanted students to see that their old method of studying was not sufficient to get them good grades. Second, I needed some measures of student performance to properly distribute students into groups. I kept groups small (three or four students per group), and students were assigned to the groups based on their test scores: each group got a student who did well on the first exam

(getting an A or B), a student who did poorly on the first exam (getting a D or F), and a student who scored in the middle (C). To the degree that I could tell from observing the students in class, I tried to assign friends and roommates to different groups to avoid within-group cliques.

To teach elaborative studying as a skill, students needed to study in the classroom, where they could be observed. Once assigned to groups, I took a list of concepts that had been covered in the previous week, and divided them up so that each group member was responsible for 3 – 4 concepts. Students were told they needed to write definitions or descriptions of these concepts, in their own words, to be done as homework. They were to prepare two copies of these definitions. At the beginning of the next day's class, they handed in one copy and kept the other. Students were then seated in their study groups and told that each member of the group was responsible for teaching his or her concepts to the rest of the group. Thus, each group would learn about twelve concepts, with each student teaching one-third of them, and learning the rest. At the end of the day's class, all members of the group would be responsible for writing definitions or descriptions of each concept covered, in their own words. Group members could not copy each other's definitions. These definitions were to be handed in as an assignment for the study skills portion of the course.

As the students worked in their groups, I joined each group for a short time. I showed students how to use a Socratic method of teaching, asking group members to supply their own ideas about what the concepts meant, rather than simply reading their own definitions. I also made sure to engage students who were not participating in their group, and made sure that all group members understood they had to work together.

I graded the definitions that were handed in, and returned them on the next. These were graded on a simple 0 – 2 point scale, where two points meant that the student had shown

understanding of the concept, one point meant the student had some idea of the concept, but not enough, and if the student didn't understand at all, he or she received a zero.

This basic process was repeated every week for most of the semester. As time went on, I needed to intervene in groups less and less, and I served mainly to answer student questions and occasionally to remind groups to stay on task, or to pull disengaged students back into their groups.

To increase student motivation for the group work, I provided extra credit points for each group. This bonus was five percent of the mean score of the two lowest test scores for that group. For example, if a group received test scores of 80%, 60%, and 40%, the mean of the two lowest scores was 50%, and five percent of this would be two and a half points, to be given to all members of the group, resulting in final scores of 82.5%, 62.5%, and 42.5%. It was hoped that this would provide an incentive for the better performing members of the group to invest time in the lowest performing members of the group, to prevent the lower performing members of the group from freeloading on the efforts of the better students, and to provide social pressure on all members to work: if group members did not work, all members would suffer a reduction in their extra credit. These extra credit bonuses were not counted in any analyses of the results.

After exam two, group membership was adjusted, as student performance levels became clearer. After this adjustment, group membership was kept as constant as possible for the rest of the semester, to build relationships and group cohesion.

This remained the basic model. Students were encouraged to use their notes, textbook, and internet resources to find answers to their questions. I continued to answer questions as needed, but otherwise my main role was to keep the groups on task. Minor adjustments to group

membership were needed after exam three, as one student formally withdrew from the combined courses and two others ceased to participate in a meaningful way.

As shown in figure two, (available from the author at dushayr@morrisville.edu) there was a noticeable difference in mean scores between the study skills students and my other sections of Intro Psych on the first test, with the study skills students scoring well below students in other sections (mean score of 60.4 vs. 73.9 for non-study skills students). However, once the study groups were formed in class, student test performance improved dramatically, so that there was no difference between study skills students and regular Intro Psych sections for tests two, three, and four.

It would appear that the skills and group based approach, as I used in Fall 2005, was more effective in bringing student performance up to the same level as that of regular Intro Psych students than the didactic approach used in Fall 2004.

Discussion and Conclusion

Why the drop off on test five and the final exam in Fall 2005 after the successes for tests two, three, and four? Remember that one of my goals was to get students to do this studying on their own outside of the classroom. After test four, students no longer met in study groups in the classroom, but were assigned to continue doing the study groups on their own time. Students were less likely to hand in their sheets of definitions, and many reported that their groups did not meet. I was unable to persuade students to continue using the technique outside of class. It appears that test scores fell as student groups fell into disuse.

While the overall results may demonstrate a striking confirmation for the effectiveness of my technique, I cannot be certain it was the elaboration technique behind student improvement. Great care must be taken in comparing Fall 04 to Fall 05: there were different student

populations in those courses, courses are taught slightly differently each semester, and the results may have been contaminated by either a Hawthorne effect (students did better because they knew I was doing a study) or a Rosenthal effect (students did better because I expected them to do better, therefore I may have subtly influenced their performance or their grading). A major confound to the study is the extra time spent on course material: the extra hour each week spent in class on the material may have been enough to boost student performance to these levels even without elaboration studying. Further study and careful comparisons are necessary to control for these possibilities.

Assuming the elaborative techniques were, in fact, responsible (a risky assumption, as noted above), what about my final goal of getting students to adopt these techniques on their own? I conclude with information from anonymous student feedback at the end of the course. Out of the fourteen responses, three indicated at least an attempt to adopt the technique for other courses. My favorite feedback was "…I made a study group in history and we all passed the 3rd test." If the technique was more effective than simply having extra time for review (and the literature suggests that it should be), and if students can be persuaded to conduct this type of studying on their own time, then it is possible that this study skills course may fulfill its promise to bring lower performing students to the same level of achievement as their peers.

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Teaching Psychology with Vision Loss: A World of Challenge, Innovation, and Skill

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As a novice instructor in the field of Psychology, the task of educating bright, inquisitive, impressionable minds can often seem daunting and terrifying. Basic elements such as preparing syllabi, writing examinations, and developing lectures may feel akin to an exploration of uncharted waters. For an individual with a visual impairment (VI) an entirely new set of concerns such as his/her clarity of writing, accuracy in taking attendance, and capability of proving competence equaled to sighted peers may arise. Thus, for colleagues in the Psychological arena, it is imperative to acquire an understanding and awareness of issues such faculty with VI may encounter as they navigate the realm of academia.

In an attempt to better understand the factors pertinent in teaching with a VI, an account of my own novice teaching with a VI is being provided. This depiction is merely a sketch of many of the challenges I faced while attempting to exhibit professionalism, confidence, and skill. Therefore, although examination of various aspects are discussed, it is impossible to capture the full experience of teaching with a VI at the novice level within the confines of this text.

Entering the Realm of Academic Psychology

In the fall of 1995 I entered a small, Christian college, dogmatically bound for a degree within the elementary education field. Shortly after beginning my academic tenure, I chose to add a special education major with the hope of better meeting the needs of students having disabilities. Although my parents were excited with respect to my entrance into higher education, they held significant concern regarding my true capability of becoming a successful instructor with a VI. In the spring of 1996 however, my parents began to feel assured when I declared a

final major in the area of psychology. My initial interest in the area was sparked by the enthusiasm demonstrated by my Foundations of Psychology professor who would soon come to be a mentor and supporter of my future academic endeavors. At this point however, no desire to become an academician had been d recognized. Thus, over the following three years, I would continue to pursue a career in general elementary education.

As my fourth year of undergraduate study commenced, my vision unexpectedly began to deteriorate. This progression would continue for the next year-and-a-half and would ultimately lead to total vision loss shortly before I would begin student teaching. In becoming aware of the decreasing vision loss, my education department faculty began vehemently pushing toward either my choosing to focus on special education with the belief that I could do more good in that arena or choosing to leave the field of education altogether. The above suggestions were provided do to the department's inability to comprehend how someone with a VI could understand the needs of and teach fully sighted children. Interestingly however, I was able to continue progressing equivalently with my peers in required education practica. However, faculty/parental fears combined with my continuing vision loss encouraged me to begin questioning the reasons for my desire to teach.

Through such contemplation, I came to realize that although I had initially entered the field of education due to a love for children and a passion for teaching, my focus had transitioned into a sheer determination to prove that I was capable of teaching without sight. In coming to terms with this reality, and with the support of my psychology advisor, I made the decision to leave elementary education and pursue advanced degrees in psychology. Thus over the following year I would complete both elementary and special education student teaching requirements,

receive a triple undergraduate degree, and prepare to travel across the country to begin a graduate tenure in clinical psychology.

Upon entering graduate school, my initial goal was to become a therapist and academician. Over the following three years, my interests would shift with respect to the level of interest in conducting therapy, while the desire to educate would remain primary. Thus, during the fall of 2005 I applied for and received my first teaching appointment at a large, diverse community college. In attaining this position, I quickly came to realize the amount of skill, strategy, and creativity it would take to thrive.

Acceptance into Academia

As I progressed through the application/interview processes, I encountered three facets of significance with respect to having a VI. The sincere desire to demonstrate competence made these aspects more difficult. For example, lingering fears of doubt regarding my ability to educate with a VI were added to typical novice anxieties.

When approaching the application process, the first facet I had to confront was the issue of disclosure. For example, I held a concern that the selection committee might see the term VI on my application and search for alternative reasons to disqualify my application. Contrarily, I did not want to be selected merely to increase the program's diversity quota. Upon endeavoring to prevent the likelihood of encountering either of the above aspects, I found two personally useful techniques. (1) Choosing to not include a VI on an application itself may be of value For a competitive candidate (i.e. strong references, valid prior experience, excellent education, etc.). Although at first this technique may appear unfair (i.e. not forthcoming with pertinent information), it merely allows those considering the applicant to have the opportunity to discern whether the individual in question has the standard qualifications to meet obligations. If the

applicant having a VI remains in consideration following the application phase and an interview has been offered, indication of the VI becomes much more critical and should thus be acknowledged. Personally I have come to find that providing information regarding VI can be highly appreciated if presented in the following manner:

- An acknowledgement is made stating that the candidate wanted to be initially considered on merit alone to ensure that his/her qualifications adequately fit the interests of the department.
- The opportunity for the selection committee to generate any questions or concerns regarding the VI which may aid in their decision is posed.

The above technique may be beneficial in two ways. (a) The process allows the applicant to demonstrate awareness of the value of merit/competence within academia. (b) The technique acknowledges the recognition of concerns associated with acceptance of an instructor having a VI. (2) For the same competitive candidate (see above), making a statement either in person or through a letter of intent that she/he has a VI and providing supporting evidence of how this is an enhancement within the academic setting may be of value. For example, I have frequently acknowledged how having a VI has provided courage to face difficult challenges and find innovative ways to solve problems. Thus, this second technique immediately places the strengths associated with a VI in the direct view of selection committee members.

Upon completion of the application phase, I found myself facing the second issue when offered an interview. Although many typical interview questions were posed (i.e. what makes you the best applicant for this position), I found myself confronted by questions specific to having a VI and the ability to teach. Although expecting such inquiries, I found myself struggling to provide experienced answers without having previously taught at the college level.

Additionally, many of the questions I encountered appeared at times as though they were intended to find significant weakness rather than indicating determination of valid teaching ability. Further many of these questions harbored on a vast array of issues. For example, I was asked questions associated with how my vision loss would impact aspects such as attendance taking and exam proctoring. During the interview the committee explained that such questions were the result of a need to determine if/how a VI might impact my actual teaching capability. Although I welcomed/appreciated such inquiries, my awareness of the need for and expectation regarding competence was significantly heightened.

The third factor I faced embraced the previous acknowledgement of concerns regarding VI and competence in teaching. Shortly prior to the start of the semester, my chair informed me that numerous faculty within the department had heard of my having a VI and receiving an adjunct teaching appointment and thus had begun to inquire about my credibility. For example, various faculty began questioning how someone with a VI could actually teach, and what they themselves might be required to do for such an individual. Fortunately my chair happened to be aware of some of my former presentation skills along with a minimal amount of my progression through graduate school, and was thus able to abate many such fears. Personally, although many such issues were not directly attacking, I was aware that such views were prevailing and that I was likely scrutinized beyond the norm for novice instructors.

At times, such perceived scrutiny posed a sense of consternation as I attempted to interact with faculty. This was in large part due to an uncertainty of whether such persons had made any of the negatory statements/inquiries regarding my ability. For example, upon encountering various faculty within my department during casual interactions, I would occasionally wonder whether the individual I was speaking with had made such statements. In cases where I found

myself focused on the above, I would come to the realization that my actions, behaviors, and statements could lead to either a positive or negative solidification of any lingering perceptions of VI and proficiency. This in turn would compel me to desire demonstration of capability and skill even when such exhibition was unnecessary. In coming to recognize this valid concern, I came to regard all interactions as possible opportunities to educate and potentially amend any erroneous expectations/stereotypes. As many of the initial fears and aspects of obtaining my position began to resolve, I came to the realization that I would soon have to face the actual challenge of teaching Psychology. *Preparation to Teach*

Upon preparing to become an academician, a number of questions entered my mind. General concerns pertinent to novice teaching such as appropriate syllabus development, and exam construction emerged. Further, additional questions specific to educating with a VI arose. For example, contemplation of issues such as taking attendance, monitoring student conduct, and grading without assistance were facets I had to explore. In order to begin to meet these challenges, I sought resources such as valued past professors, my departmental chair, and other faculty with/without vision.

Through such venues I quickly found significant support, advice, suggestions, and information with respect to general concerns associated with first-time instruction. Through general posed inquiries regarding many novice concerns, sighted colleagues were able to provide highly valuable materials and techniques. For example, in discussion with a former professor regarding concern about constructing my first exam, she provided sample exams from recently taught courses. Additionally, I found individuals enthusiastic about sharing innovative methods of teaching difficult topics such as learning, neurology, and psychopathology. Thus, using the

expertise of valued sighted colleagues proved invaluable in matters of general, non-VI-related concerns.

When moving onto the posing of questions regarding VI-based matters however, I came across an interesting phenomenon. Frequently such faculty would provide visual techniques. For example, upon questioning how someone with a VI might take attendance in a moderately large class, individuals suggested methods such as having the students simply mark their attendance on an attendance sheet. Although this technique would pose little difficulty or time constraint for sighted individuals, such a course would prove more time intensive and unproductive for someone with a VI than such an activity should warrant. For example, two significant issues would surface as a result of implementation of such a method. (a) A faculty member without sight would be left with no indicator of who had been present for a given class without sighted assistance. (b) There would be no sufficient way for an individual with a VI to ensure that students were not simply marking friends who had actually been absent as being present. Thus, I had to seek other methods of acquiring such information.

As the time to begin teaching drew closer, I found myself frequently using personal innovation mixed with trial and error. For example, during my first semester of teaching, I had been placed in a lecture hall-style classroom due to the large number of students signed up for the course. A stated benefit of this arrangement was that I would be provided with an attendance taker. Although this appeared to resolve one problem, it brought up another. I quickly came to realize that as I could not regularly match the names of students with the voices I was hearing, I could not adequately call on students by name (i.e. to answer questions) or monitor student conduct. Thus, students were seen to fall asleep or leave class when they felt I was focused elsewhere. During the spring semester however, I had been told that I would be placed in a

classroom which no longer allowed for an attendance taker. Although this brought up the above concern of how to accurately take attendance, it ultimately proved to be one of the most valuable options I would be given throughout my teaching tenure.

Shortly before the spring semester commenced, I found myself desperately attempting to find an adequate attendance taking technique. However, as noted above when asking sighted colleagues for suggestions, I was continuously provided with highly visual ideas. Further, when asking non-sighted colleagues, interestingly I was told to request sighted assistance for this obligation. With a fierce determination to demonstrate independent capability in all possible areas, I continued to contemplate the issue alone. In a last minute effort, I developed a technique which I initially expected to be insufficient. I took a small tape recorder to class and asked the students to very clearly state only their full name and immediately hand the recorder to the next student. Upon a trial run of this technique, I found several significant benefits. First, the process took each student no more than 3-5 seconds to complete, and thus a moderately large class attendance could be taken within a relatively short time. In relation, as my students were only distracted for about 9-15 seconds due to receiving, recording, and passing the device, I was able to begin lecture while attendance taking was still progressing. Further, the process allowed me to begin to match my students' names with their voices. This ability afforded the opportunity to gain adequate monitoring of student conduct/participation. For example, I was now able to recognize voices of students engaged in the discussion and students who were talking with friends. One additional intriguing benefit this process provided was that it allowed my students to feel more respect. This was brought to my attention in a humorous way one afternoon. While standing in front of the room preparing to begin teaching, a student called out to me with a question. I answered her inquiry, and than pointed in her general direction stating "hey you are in

a different seat". The chatter that had been going on around the room stopped suddenly and students began asking if/how I knew where people were sitting. I explained the recognition of voices along with a fairly strong sense of visual direction/orientation. At this point, many of my students began challenging this acknowledgement by asking where various individuals in the class typically sat. I began pointing around the room acknowledging specific rows and seats where students regularly were sitting. As a result of this 3-5 minute exercise fully completed prior to the start of lecture, I developed enough respect/interest from my students that class participation appeared to significantly increase.

In addition to the use of trial and error methods, I found peers with VI to be highly valuable commodities. Such individuals were able to provide helpful techniques with respect to issues such as preparing lecture notes and reading textbook information. For example, I was encouraged to make up Braille notes that I could easily and adequately read. Further, these colleagues were able to provide resources and techniques such as reading textbooks through e-text or tape recorded format for accuracy. As specialized companies produce many student texts in audiotape format, this process proved fairly simple, available, and adequate for my needs as an instructor.

Instruction Without Sight

Once the above factors were successfully in place, the issue of how to teach with skill and ability had to be determined. To accomplish this goal, I devised a variety of techniques which would allow me to perform the expected duties of an instructor. For example, I devised ways of being able to recognize students with raised hands, construct/grade student assignments, assist strong visual learners, acknowledge appropriate teachable moments, teach aspects of diversity, and demonstrate respect for students with disabilities. Upon creating beneficial

teaching tactics to address the above issues, I came to believe I was able to provide students with an intriguing, challenging, and mentally enhancing educational experience.

The first attribute I explored was of how to recognize when students had questions. In order to resolve this problem, I addressed the issue during the initial class session. I began the process by bringing up my own VI and related attributes (i.e. degree of vision loss, having a guide dog, etiquette). Following this discourse I acknowledged that various technical aspects of the course might be dealt with in a slightly different manner than what was typical of other courses. At this point, I would acknowledge factors such as class participation (i.e. raised hands). In order to deal with this facet, students were encouraged to simply wait until either an appropriate pause within or break between sections of a lecture and then insert a question or comment. Across the three courses I have taught, this process has proven beneficial and non-problematic. For example, students regularly approached the request appropriately and maturely.

The next aspect I faced was how to construct, proctor, and grade assignments. In most cases, constructing assignments proved relatively easy. Through the use of specialized speech software, I was able to make up exams which students noted were appropriately visually aesthetic. Although this facet proved simple, the issue of proctoring posed a new set of challenges.

Exam proctoring became one of my greatest concerns. Interestingly again, when consulting colleagues with VI, I was encouraged to turn to sighted faculty for accurate proctoring. In not wanting to consider this method, I devised a format the has ultimately proven valuable. On the day when an exam is to be distributed, I have my students engage in a normal attendance-taking process. At some unspecified point in the lecture, I stop teaching for the day, and ask students to come forward to receive their exams. As each student steps forward, she/he is

required to state his/her name again on the recorder while taking an exam from my hands. This process ensures that no student who has ether skipped lecture or left the room at this point will be allowed to take the exam. Students are told that no exam grade will be issued (i.e. receipt of a 0) if the student's name is not on the recorder during both attendance sessions. Once students have received their exams they are excused and asked to return their exam responses in electronic format by the due date/time. I am thus able to check when exams have been turned in through use of my speech software and can thus monitor whether exams are turned in late.

As another aspect of proctoring, I have had to face the issue of cheating. Initially I began giving students fully multiple choice or 1-2 word fill-in items using open-book format. As there was no way to ensure that students would not use their textbooks for a take-home exam, I simply devised more challenging questions. However, I still found occasional pairs of exams coming back with completely or highly duplicated answers, thus indicating potential cheating (i.e. very odd incorrect answers and patterns of correct/incorrect answers were identical). Thus, I began using more short-answer items requiring logical reasoning or conjecturing from students. Thus, such exam items allowed for more accurate proctoring and forced students to demonstrate their knowledge even while using their textbook.

Once the above issues were controlled, I moved onto devising a grading style. Due to the use of the electronic format grading became relatively simple. I was able to easily open up a student's e-mail, copy the material, hit reply, paste the material, and simply make marks/comments directly in the new e-mail. Students in my classes have regularly noted that they appreciated this process as it allowed them to: (a) receive their grades quickly and (b) read the comments with ease. Thus this process proved valuable and useful as it allowed me to have full independence and demonstrate the ability to accurately evaluate student progress.

In moving beyond this issue, I found myself faced with how to instruct highly visual learners. Interestingly, I had come to find that due to my own preference for visual learning, I was easily able to provide visual learners with highly visual techniques to augment their acquisition of knowledge. Such teaching methods within my classroom spanned four areas. One major area of visual instruction I came to implement involved body language, gestures, and other physical attributes. Another teaching tactic incorporated visual descriptions. For example, in attempting to teach students about problems associated with sexual content in the media, I discussed a popular prime-time television show I had recently watched. In using this visual description, many students were able to not only obtain the material, but also had the opportunity to see it in action as many acknowledged regularly watching the show and recognizing the level of sexual content involved. Another element I have frequently used has been visual imagery. After having had vision previously in life, I have found myself capable of providing fully descriptive visualizations (i.e. describing visual scenes including color, shape, contrast, and detail). Students within my courses have demonstrated the ability to attain complex information (i.e. classical conditioning attributes for first-time psychology students) with accuracy due to this technique. Additionally, student grades appear to reflect such gains (e.g. accuracy on exam items regarding material presented using visual imagery). One further technique I have employed has been use of dry-erase boards and overhead projectors. Initially, using the board posed an interesting personal concern of how I would indicate whether it was clear. In order to ensure this and related factors, I simply began asking quick, yes/no questions (i.e. did I erase the full board?). Such inquiries merely took seconds to complete, and provided adequate information. To ensure the information provided by students was accurate, I would cue in on students who had regular class attendance, demonstrated professionalism, turned in assignments on-time, and

earned strong grades. An unexpected yet intriguing benefit presented itself when using the dry-erase board. When I would attempt to diagram figures such as neurons or write material on the board, students began making comments such as "wow that really does look like a neuron". Through such exclamations I came to realize I was gaining attention from students who rarely showed interest in the course. Thus, although these individuals may have been attempting to pay no attention in class, they were still taking in something, and therefore acquiring an element of information from the course.

The use of overhead projectors presented a unique challenge. Through their use, I found myself faced with how to detect correct orientation of transparencies. In order to deal with this issue, I began using physical manipulatives such as paper clips which could easily be placed onto/removed from specific locations (i.e. the top left-hand corner) of transparencies. This technique helped to provide me with enough information for accuracy. Additionally, use of an overhead allowed for an intriguing benefit. I soon came to find that it would afford the opportunity to use physical materials to help students visualize new/difficult concepts. For example, in attempting to explain the X/Y axis chart, I placed two pieces of masking tape in the shape of an addition sign onto the transparency, and was thus able to feel and accurately point out relevant features.

Another issue I had to confront dealt with the question of when it would be appropriate to use VI as a teaching tool. Two significant experiences with direct relation to VI helped me begin to find an answer to this question. The first moment came about one afternoon during class while attempting to use a new overhead projector. Just prior to the start of class, I turned on the machine intending to ensure that students could clearly read the overhead transparency. As the light came on, it flashed directly into my eyes and thus I quickly moved backward while

acknowledging that the light was very bright. Out of curiosity, many of my students began inquiring as to whether I could actually see. In the five minutes before class was to commence therefore, I was presented with a wonderful opportunity to provide a suddenly captive audience, much of which might otherwise never take a neuroanatomy-based course, with a valuable lesson regarding the eye. In the second instance, I had been attempting to encourage a class of students to participate in a highly controversial debate. After a few prompts with no subsequent student engagement, I was about to give up when I heard a very muffled voice. In not recognizing the voice, understanding what was being said, or being able to identify the speaker, I asked the person to repeat him/herself. One student spoke up explaining that the voice was actually someone walking down the hallway talking on a cell phone. Attempting to turn a humorous situation into a great instructional moment, I acknowledged that it was easier to get people outside to participate than it was to involve my own students. This minor level of comic relief provided a wonderful way to use a vision-based mistake to ultimately generate the desired debate. Thus, when used solely for teaching purposes, I have found that responding to VI-based issues within the classroom may be of sincere educational benefit.

Beyond general teachable moments, I have found another significant value in using VI in teaching. During classes, I regularly attempted to bring diversity-based education forth, and had come to find that having a VI could at times spawn more in-depth discussion with less discomfort. For example, one afternoon while engaging students in a class discussion regarding the various types of diversity (i.e. sexual orientation, religion, SES) a student began to speak up about her brother who for several years had struggled with a diagnosis of Schizophrenia. This was thus followed by appropriate student comments and inquiries regarding how society would play a role in various aspects of his life (e.g. hindrances and augmentations). Students in the

class were thus able to broach this topic without offensive or inappropriate reactions. Further, I have come to realize that having a disability appeared to make the topic more easy to tread upon as students generally seemed interested and willing to open up within these discussions.

In going beyond general teaching issues, having a VI has proved beneficial in an additional venue personally. Through my own strives to achieve my undergraduate/graduate degrees and teaching appointments, I have developed sincere respect for the factors other students with disabilities/impairments may encounter. Thus, I have attempted to be as much of a support and encouragement to these students as possible. Therefore I endeavor to stay cognizant of factors that might pose strengths and limitations within the classroom for such students. For example, in knowing that those with VI may not have been able to see what was being written/drawn on the board, I made efforts to describe or even tactually demonstrate the material I was teaching for students with visual limitations. For other students (i.e. those having learning deficits and difficulties) I attempted to work to best help them accomplish their goals by acknowledging their concerns/needs and being willing to work through problems which might have arisen in their ability to attain material. Further, for all such students, I hoped to provide a simple yet powerful message of motivation. Through personal experience, I have come to believe that with support, encouragement, and sheer determination students can succeed, even if it means materials, exams, and other factors need to have accommodations in order to be accomplished with adequacy.

Mentorship and Academic Success

In relation to the above, I have come to realize how my role may impact students having VI. In my own experience as a student, I had never been privy to having an instructor or professor with a VI, and thus came to realize how significantly impacting this could prove. For

example, although I felt I have generally been given support and encouragement in my studies in psychology, many faculty struggled to comprehend how to best help bolster someone with a VI. Thus, with respect to my own students, I believe that providing mentorship could be of sincere value. Most significantly my hope is to allow my own students to recognize that someone has confidence in their skill and knows what it may take to see their goals achieved.

In relation, I have come to find great value in mentorship for myself. As a first-time instructor, I found benefit from two distinct sources. (a) Faculty mentors having VI proved key in helping me ascertain competence as an instructor. For example, mentors have helped me acquire skills, ideas, and techniques which fostered my presentation as an academician. Such individuals further demonstrated the ability to help qualm many of my fears related to teaching with a VI. (b) Faculty mentors with vision have also demonstrated significant benefit in my developing as an instructor. For example, such persons have provided support, advice, information, and strategies with respect to teaching overall (i.e. exam construction). Such individuals have also been able to provide innovative ways of exploring VI-related concerns/inquiries. Mentors with vision have the added value of helping to reduce many of the general novice fears associated with teaching as a whole. Thus, mentorship has truly proven advantageous personally in my development of professionalism, style, and skill as an academician.

Drawing of Conclusions

Overall the hope for this paper is that it will provide individuals with recognition that those with VI should not automatically be seen as limited in their capabilities. Rather, such persons should be viewed as able to achieve their endeavors. Such accomplishment may take

skill, dedication, and creativity, but through valued support, affirmative reactions, and appropriate mentorship, such goals may be attained.

In realizing that today's students are tomorrow's leaders (even those with VI) it is imperative that academicians do everything possible to allow their students with VI to foster their skill equally with their sighted peers. Likewise, faculty would provide significant value in extending this same level of support/confidence to colleagues with VI as these individuals are helping endow students with the skill necessary to excel in the field. Overall in order to meet this endeavor, those within academic psychology need to believe that "it's not the sight that creates success, it's the vision" (source unknown).

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It's Better to Be a Guide on the Side than a Sage on the Stage

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During my presentation I first presented an overview of the workshop. I then compared collaborative learning with cooperative learning. I discussed the principles of cooperative learning and the research findings of Johnson, Johnson and Smith. I then discussed the need for a transition from lecturing to cooperative learning (I call this a bridge). I next described and discussed the research I had done on the cooperative learning procedure I call "Quiz-quiz". I followed this introduction to this procedure with a simulation of it using information from the workshop for demonstration purposes. I answered questions regarding this procedure throughout the workshop and many in attendance could see how this would help their students with learning content in a variety of classes. I truly enjoyed meeting those I met at this conference and look forward to attending again.

Learning by Doing: Teaching General Psychology

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"Tell me and I'll listen, show me and I'll understand, involve me and I'll learn"

Teaching general psychology for many years I have found that the best way for my student's to *master* course content and truly *enjoy* what they are learning is through active learning. Active learning techniques frequently involve critical and creative thinking areas that students find challenging. Students' enjoy taking a participatory role in learning rather than adopting a receptive, passive posture. After taking a seminar in Active Learning at Nassau Community College, I have developed a portfolio of some techniques I have employed.

Research has consistently shown that traditional lecture methods, in which the professor talks and students listen, dominate the classroom. Active learning *is not* the norm. With this in mind, it is essential to know: 1) the nature of active learning, 2) the empirical research on its use, 3) the common obstacles and barriers that give rise to faculty members' resistance to these interactive instructional methods and, 4) how faculty can create excitement in the classroom through active learning techniques.

The Nature of Active Learning:

Surprisingly, educators' use of the term "active learning" has relied on an intuitive understanding, rather than a common definition. Consequently, many faculty assert that *all* learning is inherently active and that students are actively involved while listening to a formal classroom presentation. Analysis of recent research however, suggests that students must do *more than* just listen; they must read, write, discuss and be engaged in solving problems. Perhaps, most importantly, to be actively involved, students must engage in higher-order-

thinking tasks such as: analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Within this context, it is proposed that strategies promoting active learning be defined as instructional activities involving students in *doing* and *thinking about what they are doing.*

Some important characteristics of active learning are: it is student-centered and focuses on understanding and thinking, rather than rote memorization. It is meaningful to students to use real-life examples, and to show the applicability of what they are learning. Students quickly realize that lectures are not just a spectator sport; they "belong" to the students.

Empirical Research

Currently, most published articles on active learning have been descriptive accounts rather than empirical investigations. Research is out-of-date, either chronologically or methodologically. This is unfortunate since the use of active learning is vital because of its powerful impact upon students' learning. Studies have shown that students *prefer* strategies promoting active learning to traditional lectures. Studies evaluating students' achievement have demonstrated that methods utilizing active learning are comparable to lectures in developing the *mastery* of course *content* but, *superior* to lectures in the development of student's skills in *thinking* and *writing.* Additionally, a significant number of individuals have learning styles best served by pedagogical techniques other than lecturing. Therefore, a thorough and scholarly approach to skillful teaching requires that faculty become knowledgeable about the many ways active learning has been successfully used across the disciplines. Further, each faculty member should engage in self-reflection, exploring his/her personal willingness to experiment with alternative approaches to instruction.

Barriers

A number of obstacles/barriers exist that prevent faculty from using active learning strategies. Active learning exercises take class time which is often very limited. Faculty must reconcile the fact that in terms of covered material sometimes “less is more”. Students must be given time to understand class material. Active learning requires an increased amount of preparation time to design interactive, creative techniques. Active learning is difficult to use in large classrooms. However, some of the greatest barriers, in terms of risks are: 1) that the technique will not work, 2) students will not participate, 3) some students may not be able to use higher-order thinking required of the techniques, 4) students will not master sufficient course content, 5) faculty may feel a loss of control of their class, 6) some faculty may lack the necessary skills, and 7) some faculty may feel adversely criticized for using unorthodox techniques. Each of these barriers/obstacles can be overcome with thorough and thoughtful planning.

1) At the onset, I state the goal of the activity: students should understand before the lesson begins what they must master. 2) I explain the expected outcome. 3) I outline the procedures students should follow. 4) I specify the time limit of the strategy.

Techniques:

1) Journal Keeping
2) Fact or Fiction Exercise
3) Candid Camera in the Classroom
4) Dream Analysis
5) Personality Tests
6) Media Portrayal of Mental Illness

All of the above techniques involve dialoguing with self, dialoguing with others, observing social situations and an exercise involving role-playing.

Journal Keeping

On the first day of class I ask that students keep an ongoing journal whereby they must think reflectively on the subjects they are reading. Each week they are asked to address the following questions: 1) What have you learned? 2) What have you found difficult? 3) About what would you like to hear more? 4) What active learning technique did you like and why? 5) Which active learning technique did you dislike and why? I collect the journals periodically and comment on them, paying particular attention to questions 4 and 5 in order to improve my lectures (to teach is to learn twice over). This "conversational style" journal has proven valuable to all, students and teacher. Students have commented that they appreciate my time and effort. I have come to a better understanding of my students' abilities and concerns.

Fact or Fiction Exercise- Preconceived Notions

Often students' prior knowledge is incomplete or there are false beliefs and critical misconceptions. Professors do not simply need to know that students know something about the topic to be introduced but, they need to investigate students' prior knowledge in detail so that false beliefs/misconceptions can be identified. I ask my students to look at the texts' table of contents. They are asked to select a topic that interests them and state their preconceived ideas regarding the topic. They are asked to search the web and find two relevant and recent research articles on the topic and state how their preconceived ideas have changed after reading the articles. Another variation of this assignment is the following. I assign students topics that have opposing viewpoints. I find that it is valuable for students to understand that experts can disagree and that for some questions there are no clear-cut answers. This assignment encourages

students to apply critical thinking techniques to opinions and statements. They are asked to challenge their assumptions and biases. Finally, they must synthesize their positions.

Candid Camera in the Classroom

This is an observing exercise which is particularly relevant when covering the social psychology chapter. The professor begins by describing Solomon Asch's classic experiment on conformity. The class is broken into small groups of 5 students who are given some time to design their own experiments addressing conformity. Students then go out into the field to "role play" their experiment. Role playing gives them an opportunity for experiential learning; they see the interconnectedness of knowledge and the subtle complexities of situations. By simulating a situation, they expand their personal experiences while learning what is ethically appropriate.

Dream Analysis Exercise

This is an active exercise involving group work that gives students an opportunity to interact and collaborate in a mutually respectful, positive environment. For homework, I ask the students to keep a dream journal for a week (they are instructed on how to do this). They are asked to read over the chapter on the various theories regarding the purpose of dreaming. In class, they are divided into small groups of five students. One student is given the role of describing his/her dream while the others record the dream. The students are given the following instructions: 1) identify the main "theme" or "concept." To do this, students are instructed to take away the details of the dream (names, things, places) leaving only the action. 2) Apply the "theme-to-me." Match the theme/concept to a specific area in your life. Ask the question: what specific area of my life is this dream about? Particular attention should be focused on the emotional state of the dream. 3) Analyze the dream details, the symbols. At this point, I give

them a dream dictionary and discuss the problems of applying universal meaning to dream details. Finally, the class comes together, and we discuss their particular dreams in relation to what the various theorists would say.

Personality Tests

Students are given a homework assignment to find a test on the web claiming to assess personality. They are then asked to write a short paper critiquing the site. In class, they share their findings, where a lively discussion ensues on the merits of the test. This exercise shows the students how to evaluate web sources.

Media Portrayal of Mental Illness

This exercise requires students to write a short application paper after they watch a movie portraying a mental illness. (I provide a list of movies i.e., *Me, Myself and Irene, A Beautiful Mind, The Three Faces of Eve, Sleeping With The Enemy, What About Bob, Girl Interrupted, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Sybil, As Good As It Gets, Ordinary People, Identity*, to name a few). After having read the text and listening to the lecture, they are asked to determine if the movie adequately portrays this illness. Why or why not?

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is important to select an active learning technique with which one feels comfortable. Start with low-risk strategies that are typically of short duration, structured and planned, focused on subject matter that is neither too abstract nor too controversial. Most of all, it is essential to have fun and learn with the class!

It Takes a Village: Mnemonics and General Psychology

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It was nearly a decade ago when I first heard of the World Memory Championships. This is a world event involving the top memorizers in the world and is held every summer. There are many events leading to the naming of a world champion. An example of one such event is the memorization of a shuffled deck of cards in 30 seconds (no one has done it to date; it is like the four minute mile for memory). And I was reminded of my earlier fascination with how memory could be facilitated by the use of mnemonics, since it was with the method of loci (space visualizations with coded concepts put in various places) that I had succeeded in my graduate career.

About that time I was also playing with the organization of my coursebooks around certain themes for the various courses I taught. For example I had a graduate course in small group analyses which I had organized around a biosphere simulation [figure 1]. In that coursebook the sequence of pages, together with concepts associated with the group analysis, were arranged so that students could follow (and presumably rehearse) important concepts that I would lecture about and then we would do an activity associated with “that day in the biosphere”. I have yet to publish this simulation.

Gradually my coursebooks became filled with the various summary graphics and often weirdly shaped concept maps for a sequence of topics. In most of these coursebooks there was really not a total organization scheme, and they had become a hodgepodge of the various overhead transparencies, visuals and others I had created that the students had found useful and had requested copies of following some lectures. So, today’s presentation is about how I came to

build a “town village with a commons and various houses and other structures” into a coursebook mnemonic for general psychology.

Let me backtrack a bit into the psychology of memory. Most of us probably associate its beginnings with Ebbinghaus. The problem is Ebbinghaus was concerned with forgetting and not the storage /retrieval part of it. Actually the memory issues in humans goes back into prehistory with various pieces of material used to mark off primarily economic events, such as cordage (Mayans), transactions (Sumerians) and so forth-indeed an ancient problem. But one can really go to the heart of the matter in asking *how* ancestral humans remembered their way around their hunting and gathering life and how to assemble the toolkits, the stone-age helpers that evolved into space shuttles. There are a number of hypotheses in evolutionary psychology (Buss, 2004) which involve savanna, scavenging, and especially the gathering hypothesis [figure2]. There are proven sex differences between men and women with respect to specific spatial abilities [figure 3-discussion]. According to Mithen (1996) there is, or was, a natural history mental module [figure 4] that evolved to help track the changes in the animals and the plants, and where they were located at the various times of the year. As he points out, without some sort of a mental memory compass we would have all starved to death. And women are especially good at a mental practice called “landmarking”. This would have been the prehistory version of what we call today the “method of loci” [figure 5] and generally credit the ancient Greeks, then the medieval monastics with creating. So perhaps the point at this junction in the discussion is that men may be better at some kinds of mnemonics, and women better at others. Classical SSSM (Standard Social Science Model) Psychology, of course, assumes that men and women are equal at mnemonics. But are they? Perhaps it might be better to fit the “memory tricks” to the user. The real work in psychology on memory (or so we credit it) began roughly with the cognitive

revolution and the Atkinson-Shriffin (1968) three-stage model of information processing, sometimes called the “stores” model [figure 6] for sensory store, short-term store, and the long-term store. And then there were the three associated processes of encoding, storing and retrieving to research. [figure 7]. Nor should we forget Allan Paivio’s (1969) dual coding theory which proposed that information is stored in long-term memory in two forms: verbal codes and visual codes. So we now have language to go along with ancient humans’ “landmarking. Other research was to show that prior knowledge shapes our encoding through schemas, through associative networks, through emotional memories (state-dependent memory) [figure 8], as well as context coding [figure 9]. The work on the investigation of the processes responsible for remembering, motivated forgetting, and amnesia has been monumental. As has the work on memory as a constructive process, misinformation effects, “false memories”, and eyewitness testimony. Perhaps the most controversial of all for psychology of the 1990’s was the recovered memory scandals, which ending up falsely imprisoning a number of people, as well as lawsuits against therapists. Clearly memory can be a tricky affair!

Culture and memory have a reciprocal relationship. On the one side culture influences how the perceptual schemas we employ to remember and recall, as in the individualistic v. collectivist lenses. On the other the very nature of culture is dependent upon the orally recalled memories of the elders. On the controversial side there is a school of thinking in evolutionary psychology called “memetics’ which suggests that it’s really memes and not memories that get transmitted in the memeplexes we called culture (Blackmore 1999). In any event it seems clear that research in this vital area will continue to increase in complexity. In particular the recent approach to memory called the “depth-of-processing”, which is based upon neurologically developed understanding shows great promise [figures 10, 11 and 12].

Returning to our story about the evolution of my coursebooks, I had noticed that the texts which I chose to accompany my coursebooks had definite and sometimes fascinating organizing principles. For example, recent texts by Passer & Smith (2006) used a levels-of-analysis (LOA) principle, Kassim (2006) used a modular approach, Plotnik (2005) also used modules (on every page!) as well as highly visual learning and chunking, and so forth. It seemed many of the intro text writers were getting in on the idea to take advantage of mental frameworks in our innocent and beginning students. So I began to experiment with various formats in my intro psych coursebooks.

In the first semester, I used Stonehenge (England) as an iconic device [figure 13]. I had students (on an individual basis) put concepts for the chapter/module in the Course Unit (show syllabus on overhead) into the figure of men and women pictured visiting the Stonehenge Monument [figure 14]. This seemed to go well until the students began to worry the ancient pagan rites that were supposed to be associated with Stonehenge might be affecting their minds! Hastily I beat a retreat with this approach not wanting to confront the fundamentalist authorities in the township where my University is located. Next semester I tried (what I thought was) an innocent approach of Homes and Gardens magazine [figure 15] in order to have the students design their own home, adorned with the concepts, topics and deep thoughts of modern psychology. Many of my students come from the cities of Newark and Elizabeth N.J. and I became stunned to realize that many of them thought I was trying to turn them into stodgy, middle-class suburbanites instead of the hip-hop, with-it, drive-by-MacDonald's meals dudes they knew they were. Again, I frantically shifted gears not wanting to be the object of a walk-by-the-classroom thrown tomato. Now, thinking I knew what is was that they really wanted, I developed a map of downtown Elizabeth [figure 16] (near the University) where they could romp

to their hearts content with their method of loci mnemonic with the classical concepts of psychology. This was the semester that I was sure would get them. To my utter horror they informed me that the neighborhood was extremely dangerous and no way would they go around putting little parts of the brain on this street or that one, parts of the sensory systems where they could be run over, and cute little stages of development on the building walls as they would accused of “tagging” (painting graffiti-a big misdemeanor in Elizabeth) and arrested!

OK, now I was determined to succeed with a mnemonic coursebook that *would* appeal to them, without my preconceived ideas. So I asked them! To my utter astonishment they informed me that they would like to live in a medieval town with a commons, much like the picture [figure 17] I showed them of a `13th century demesne (which mean a lord’s domain in Norman England) when I was explaining social dilemmas like the commons problem. OK, I was on it like a flash. Put them to work compiling mnemonic tools and explaining them to themselves, with myself occasionally supplying helpful definitions, examples, and demonstrations. It worked! And here is the result [figure 18].

So here we have the Great Hall of Memory of the Science of Psychology [figure 19] on the Village Commons, from which the paths will lead to the garden plots of the schools and perspectives of psychology spread around it. Note the carefully tended gardens of Functionalism and Cross-Cultural Psychology. Next we visit the first House of the Neuron [figure 20] where the plumbing and electricity represent the nervous systems and the Attic of the Brain. And next the House of Sensation and Perception [figure 21] with its turrets and the conservatory (gestalt organizing principles) behind it. Next we visit the House of Change [figure 21] where the apartments of learning, consciousness, language, intelligence all have their own unique configurations and the different mnemonics the students came to associate with them.

So the following pages demonstrate the uses of these mnemonics: first letter mnemonics (FPOT-Frankie smokes pot; frontal, parietal, occipital and temporal), peg words, peg events, scripting, role playing, different Roman Rooms (method of loci) utilizing walls furniture and other visualizations. As you may see, the coursebook approach takes the general mnemonic of the Journey method and then transposes different Roman Rooms onto the semester Journey, in a way that is largely devised by and fits the individual student. While I set up the most general framework of the Village Commons and Houses, the student efforts are rewarded in the learning. I do look at each of the students' efforts and there are prizes (points) for the most creative, the best team-devised and so forth. I never get bored and the students' learning and transfer of learning onto the world they live in is far greater through this involvement with the Coursebook. Better living through Mnemonics (and doing)!

Discussion period of 25 minutes. Figures referred to in the text may be obtained from jspringe@kean.edu by request unless protected by copyright.

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