

Engaging Students in Learning

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Engaging Students in Learning

“Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, related it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.” (Chickering & Gamson, 1986)

Outline

- *What does engaging students in learning mean and its importance*
- *Perceptions about students engagement: comparison between NSSE and FSSE*
- *Use of Students Engagement Techniques*
- *Barriers to student engagement*
- *Practical Tips for Engaging Students in Learning*

Seven Principles For Good Practice In Undergraduate Education

By Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson

From The American Association for Higher
Education Bulletin, March 1987

Seven Principles For Good Practice In Undergraduate Education

The first three principles for good practice:

1. encourages contact between students and faculty
2. develops reciprocity and cooperation among students,
3. encourages active learning

Engaging Students in Learning

- Engage students in activities that require them to reflect on ideas and how they are using those ideas
- Involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing
- Focus the responsibility of learning on learners who engage with the contents and cognitively become active in the learning process

Why Engaging Students in Learning?

- Increases learner's retention and understanding of contents
- Improves students attitudes
- Increases students attention span and time on task
- Increases student skills such as critical thinking, communicating, reading, and writing

Examples Of Student Engagement Approaches in the Classroom

- Pause to give students a chance to ask questions, clarify and consolidate their notes with others
- Engage students in small/large group discussion(s), debates, and/or peer teaching
- Insert brief demonstrations, short ungraded exercises, and/or simulation exercises
- Use clickers to find out if students are understanding the material
- Request students to present their work, and share their ideas/experiences

Examples Of Student Engagement Approaches outside the Classroom

- Give students reading/writing assignments
- Give students group projects
- Assign student research work
- Set up small-groups tutorial sessions
- Design laboratory and hands-on experiments

Engaging Students in Learning: The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

- Annual survey of first-year and senior students in four-year colleges and universities nationwide
- Student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide
- In 2008: 370,000 students from 774 institutions; 715 first-year and 760 seniors from SDSU responded for an overall response rate of 41%.



www.nsse.iub.edu

Engaging Students in Learning: The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

NSSE Benchmarks:

1. Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)
2. Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)
3. Student-Faculty interactions (SFI)
4. Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)
5. Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

Active and Collaborative Learning: Students Perceptions

The ACL benchmark measures student involvement in activities and strategies that enhance learning such as

- asking questions in class and contributing to discussions,
- making presentations,
- working with others on projects both inside and outside of class,
- tutoring,
- and discussing ideas from class with others.

Active and Collaborative Learning: Low Students Results

SDSU First Year Mean: 39.1; Carnegie Peers
Mean: 41.9

SDSU Senior Mean: 48.2; Carnegie Peers
Mean: 50.1

Engaging Students in Learning: Barriers

- Internal faculty resistance, fear of trying something new/fear of failing
- Giving up control of the class vs. lecturing
- High volume of course contents to be covered
- Extra time needed to design and implement
- Challenges in assessing group work
- Students' resistance to active role instead of passive attitudes
- Students' complaints about doing work

Engaging Students in Learning: Student Engagement Techniques

A crosswalk table provides a mechanism for correlating NSSE survey questions with Student Engagement Techniques (SETs)

According to the book: Student Engagement Techniques
A Handbook for College Faculty
By Elizabeth F. Barkley

Engaging Students in Learning: Student Engagement Techniques

Survey Question: Asked questions in class
or contributed to class discussions

SETs: Small Group Tutorials, Muddiest
Point Exercises

Engaging Students in Learning: Student Engagement Techniques

Survey Question: Worked with other students on projects **during class**

SET: Think-Pair-Share

Engaging Students in Learning: Student Engagement Techniques

Survey Question: Worked with classmates **outside of class** to prepare class assignments

SETs: Homework assignments, Group projects, Seminar/class presentation

Engaging Students in Learning: Student Engagement Techniques

Survey Question: Tutored or Taught other students

SETs: Team work, Group research, Group presentations

Practical Tips for Engaging Students in Learning

- Explain to students the benefits of and reasons for engaging them in their learning
- Introduce one student engagement activity at a time
- Interact with students during activities and stay engaged
- Evaluate and track the effectiveness of each activity
- Debrief students after each activity and the learning outcomes it served
- Keep only the activities that worked well for you and for the students and contributed to their learning

Comments/Questions