Title: Models of Inquiry in Brief

Overview: We ask many questions of ourselves as teachers. The portfolio project formalizes the process for developing and testing a “question” in your classroom. Addressing your curiosity about teaching in a structured manner is the goal of an Inquiry Portfolio Project.

Group members will describe the commonalities and differences between benchmark portfolios and inquiry portfolios. The four steps to carrying out an effective inquiry will be considered. The process of formulating the “question,” to developing an assessment strategy, then evaluating the results, followed by recommendations for the results, will be explained.

Members will openly review the hurdles and gains of the process. The session will conclude with a summary of the major benefit of collegiality that kept us moving forward.

Authors: Inquiry Portfolio Group

Title: Does the use of a common case for application of clinical theories promote students’ understanding of the relevance of historical and current theoretical frameworks?

Overview: During class sessions two and six, students will watch an episode of a cable series. Students will be asked to apply the theories to the theme of the program. Students will also be asked to diagnosis characters from the show, then create a treatment plan specifically designed based upon theories studied in the class and from the course readings. The students will identify specific characters when each new theory is presented weekly. The content from the two episodes will allow students to share a common experience and a common “case” for theoretical application of course content. By the end of the semester, students will be able to integrate the theoretical material and apply the theories to identified cases.

Author: Brenda J. Barnwell, LCSW, CADC, ABD  Associate Professor of Social Work

Title: Does incorporating active and problem based learning activities improve students’ perceptions of learning in PED3300?

Overview: Historically the teaching of this course focused around PowerPoint lectures, class discussion of concepts, and lab activities. To explore my inquiry, students were asked to describe what type of learner they were (visual, auditory, or kinesthetic). Results indicated that most of the students were either kinesthetic learners or a mix of kinesthetic and visual. I decreased the amount of PowerPoint presentations, incorporated case studies twice a week, brought in a guest speaker, and had students attend a professional conference in Chicago. The capstone project was a laboratory notebook. Students assessed health status, compiled fitness assessment data and constructed exercise prescriptions for six individuals. At the end of the semester, students were given a questionnaire and asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 how they felt the above activities and assignments contributed to their learning in PED3300. Results indicated that students felt that the active and problem based learning activities substantially contributed to their learning as oppose to the PowerPoint presentations which they indicated either contributed somewhat or moderately contributed to their learning.

Author: Jen Buckley, Ed.D.  Associate Professor and Chair of School of Health and Physical Education
Title: Does a more interactive, multimedia reading experience result in greater student learning?

Overview: My inquiry portfolio comes directly from some of the findings of my benchmark portfolio for introductory art history. My data revealed that students were completing the course successfully while still be unable to reliably distinguish one style or period from another, one of the goals of the course. They also reported feeling that the course readings did not contribute much to their learning. This suggests that even if students did the reading, they did not get much out of it. I wanted to see if I could address both these issues by using an online learning system that includes a textbook but also has self-assessments and personalized study plans built in.

Author: Libby Karlinger Escobedo, Ph.D.    Associate Professor of Art History

Title: The use of process oriented learning increases the learning, understanding and retention of accounting concepts.

Overview: My portfolio grew out of changes in my approach to teaching from the learning I did with my Benchmark portfolio. This is to use active learning to promote learning of major concepts for each chapter. The process, POGIL, requires students to actively engage with others to solve short problems in the classroom.

Author: Daniel Goeckner    Adjunct Professor Accounting

Title: Using Peer Role-plays in a Diversity Course to Teach Cultural Competence

Overview: The study will explore how one faculty member used peer role-plays in an MSW diversity course to teach concepts related to cultural competence. The study will explore how faculty can use this method to assist students in applying knowledge on diversity to clients from various cultures.

Author: Henry W. Kronner, Ph.D.    Associate Professor of Social Work

Title: “Is that textbook worth $150?” Comparing the use of primary source materials versus the use of a traditional text in a Communication writing course

Overview: The use of primary source materials has been validated in English literature, interdisciplinary and some other courses, but can they be effectively used in teaching Communications writing? Or does the use of a more traditional textbook better promote student learning in this area? By comparing two courses—one using a traditional textbook and one in which a variety of primary source materials (book chapters, articles, online resources and multimedia course modules) are used—this course portfolio will seek to discover a best practice to implement in a standard syllabus for a required core course in the major.

Author: Heidi Schlumpf, MTS    Associate Professor of Communication
Title: How can I take a deeper look into well-received and proven learning activities that previous students have assessed as effective teaching?

Overview: I began my participation in the 2013-2014 inquiry portfolio process with a desire to analyze more deeply some activities that I find myself repeating with students in Latino Studies 1200. Through colleague input and dialogue, I was encouraged to examine how to improve teaching activities that students from past courses found to be good. During fall 2013, therefore, I collected data on student perceptions of the learning made possible through our class field trip to the National Museum of Mexican Art; in-class written reflections on a memoir written by a Puerto Rican male of African heritage born in New York's Spanish Harlem in 1928; and, student reactions to questions about factors that contribute to the presence of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the United States.

Author: Eva Serrano, Ed.D.

Title: "How well has the initial plan for this pilot course worked, and what does the pilot run suggest that the next steps should be?"

Overview: Rather than develop a narrowly targeted Inquiry Portfolio, I decided to use take the opportunity to develop a more general one that could be shared with colleagues newly teaching our new IDS 2020: Trajectories of Human History course. The portfolio will offer an overview of the ways in which I sought to facilitate student achievement of learning outcomes; sample lesson plan ideas, assignments, assessments, and student feedback; analysis of the effectiveness of different approaches, readings, and other media used; and suggestions for improvement.

Author: Mark Soderstrom, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of History

Title: Does utilizing non-traditional teaching methods and multimedia assignments improve students' perceptions and actual learning in a Correctional Services course?

Overview: Perhaps the biggest hurdle in a corrections course is students’ inability to see (or their refusal to accept) that prisons and jails do not operate as isolated institutions; but rather, impact society in very concrete as well as indirect ways. Specifically, with close to 95% of the current prison population being released back into society at some point, it’s a fact that almost all of what’s going in—is coming out. Non-traditional teaching methods (song lyrics, singing, costumes and poetry—individually) and multimedia assignments will be used to break the traditional student-learning barrier that is experienced by faculty colleagues nationwide. Actual learning will be assessed via exams and perceptions will be gauged via individual drawings of prisoners on the first and last class days.

Author: Stephanie Whitus, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Criminal Justice