

CETL Capstone Project: Restructuring Drug Education
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For my CETL capstone project, I redesigned Hlth 310 Drug Education for the spring semester of 2006. Currently, as one of the instructors for Hlth 310, I have found that over 95% of all students who are enrolled in this course are Education majors. Being such, they are mainly students who wish to learn strategies and techniques related to their future abilities to teach K-12 drug education. As it stands currently, Hlth 310 is a course designed to cater to mainly to students within the College of Allied Health and Nursing, and therefore, there is no component set in place to teach future teachers (education majors) how to teach Drug Education to their future students.

Not only did education majors benefit from the redesign of this course to help them better understand how to teach drug education and prevention effectively to k-12 graders, I used this opportunity to incorporate active learning components and implement online technology (Desire 2 Learn) throughout the duration of the course.

As a first year faculty member here at Minnesota State University, I am learning and will continue to gain a vast array of knowledge from the CETL Certificate Program regarding active learning techniques and course redesign methodologies. From this program, I successfully redesigned Hlth 310 to become one of the strongest courses to promote active learning that understands the importance of teaching education majors appropriate skills and techniques that they in turn will be using to teach their future students. I redesigned the syllabus to promote an active classroom; I added assessment techniques so I could promote leadership, cooperation, and consistent opportunities for the students to gain experience teaching to others.

Using several of the techniques learned through the CETL Certificate program, I incorporated the use of D2L (Desire to Learn), along with the active learning components of reflection pieces to ascertain knowledge students gained from classroom activities. Students were forced to be in an environment that had them become team members with classmates as they worked on a group presentation to research and present a lesson plan for a specific grade level. Students were able to constructively critique their own group members at the conclusion of their group projects. Students learned the class goals of developing leadership skills, functioning in large groups, developing presentation skills, conducting a class, and developing communication skills.

Students continually learned how to teach to their future students through classroom activities that will apply to their future roles as teachers. They learned leadership qualities, organizational skills, information gathering techniques through research analysis papers, chose specific parameters in which to engage their target audience (K-12 students), and articulated their findings to their classmates. Classmates in turn, constructively critiqued the lesson plans.

Through several evaluations and constant feedback from students that are enrolled in the spring 2006 Hlth 310 course that I instructed, I used classroom assessment techniques this spring semester class as a trial course to test and retest several active learning components along with information, lectures, videos, projects, papers, presentations, and other learning techniques that were used throughout the semester to specifically engage the education majors within my classroom. Throughout the semester, I ascertained feedback from all students within the classroom. I believe that student feedback is critical towards understanding their specific needs, not only for the education majors, but from all students enrolled in the classroom. Most of this assessment was made through the implementation of D2L (Desire 2 Learn).

D2L allows for students the opportunity for content comprehension and reflection by making frequent comments and opinions regarding the week's information presented within the classroom, and how improvements can be made. This provided more active participation by the students and enabled them to stay apprised of course information and any changes made. D2L also provides variety to instructional methods, and the opportunity to provide technology within the classroom. The course content provides current information regarding course schedules, content procedures, due dates for projects and presentations, and important links to supplemental information. Assignments posted on D2L provide students the ease of clarifying instructions by referring to online postings. Online exams were given to assess students' comprehension of course content. This D2L feature provided ease of grading, immediate access to grades after completion of tests, provided feedback on student comprehension of course material, and allowed students the ease of completing the exams in a comfortable environment rather than in the classroom. Finally, the grade book feature of D2L provided students the immediate access to their grades throughout the semester including private comments from the instructor.

This plan highly supports the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning goals to promote learning that is critical towards student enhancement of skills and techniques that can effectively create successful future professionals. Not only will the promotion of learning be supported, student needs for a productive learning atmosphere will be met. These goals are maintained by preparing students for professional practice and competency development in health education through review of curriculum. This capstone project is an excellent example of taking the initiative to review and redesign a course that allows the majority of students enrolled to learn skills and gain the knowledge necessary to be soundly prepared for professional practice in the world of education.