Course Organization Strategies

Carol Burns
Faculty Teaching Certificate Program: Capstone Project
2007 - 2008
Background Information

- Creating Significant Learning Experiences by L. Dee Fink
  - Initial Phase
    - Building strong components
  - Intermediate Phase
    - Assembling the components
  - Final Phase
    - Taking care of details
Project Goals

- Create a structure for organizing courses that:
  - Integrated standards and outcomes
  - Engaged students in learning
  - Assessed outcomes
  - Provided effective feedback

- Create a structure for organizing courses that encouraged:
  - Effective planning and preparation
  - Professional reflection and growth
Initial Phase: Building Strong Components

- Where am I?
- Where do I want to go?
- How will my students and I know if we get there?
- How am I going to get there?
- What resources do I have?
### Integrated Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goals</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Learning Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Discuss the potential impact of genetics, infectious, and biological influences on Developmental Delays | 1. Group presentation  
2. Create a document that includes information on the genetic, infectious, and biological causes of mental retardation. Information must include: a definition of the condition, a description of why it is or can be a cause of mental retardation, and common characteristics or common traits of those with the condition. Please create one page for each of the categories. However, you may organize the information on each page in a manner that is useful to you. Be sure to cite your sources of information. All materials should be professional in appearance. | Sign up for a topic (3 people per group)  
Prepare a 20 minute presentation that:  
• Tells us what this condition is  
• Tells us why it is or can be a cause of MR  
• Characteristics or common traits of the condition  
• Cite your sources of information  
1. Hydrocephalus/microcephaly/hypoxia  
2. Phenylketonuria/Tay-Sachs/galactosemia  
3. Down Syndrome/Fragile X Syndrome/Prader-Willi  
4. Rubella, syphilis/meningitis  
5. Drugs/lead  
6. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome  
7. Poverty |
Intermediate Phase: Assembling the Components

- What are the major topics of this course?
- What will my students need to do?
- How will the instructional and learning activities be integrated?
## Topics and Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2/4/08   | Developmental Delays: Definition, characteristics, distinctions between mild and severe | Chapter 1, pages 14-21, Chapter 2 | 1. Choose a card and find the mate to it.  
2. Take a minute to decide what the title of your Droodle card might be. There are no wrong answers!  
3. Your task: Find as many definitions of mental retardation or developmental cognitive disability as you can.  
4. Bring them back to class to share and be ready to pick them apart at 10:45.  
5. You may use your text and any other resources available to you. |
Final Phase: Taking Care of Details

- How will I grade?
- What could go wrong?
- Write the syllabus.
- How will I know how it’s going?
Professional Reflection

- What went well today?
- What might be the reasons for that?
- What did I learn from this?
- How will I apply this learning?
Project Outcomes

- Fall vs. Spring Courses
  - Each class intentionally addresses the standards assigned
  - Students are more engaged and report having fun
  - Outcomes are assessed either informally or formally each week
  - Based on feedback given to students, the quality of work submitted has improved

- Because courses were thought out up front:
  - My time is focused more on researching the content of my class rather than planning what each class needs to cover
  - My reflection has fostered changes in learning activities and assessments that provide me with better understanding of student learning