The Millennial Classroom: Identities & Cultures in Teaching & Learning

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Thursday
- identify the characteristics of our students as millennial students
- identify our students’ strengths and weaknesses as learners
- collect good practices of active learning
- brainstorm strategies for engaging Benedictine students in the classroom, whether face to face or on-line

Friday
- explore practices for good course design, using backward design to ensure the learning goals drive course
  - structure
  - content
  - assessment

Thursday, August 17, 2017

Kegan: Transformational Learning for Adult Learners

Into which part of the cycle does most of your teaching energy and effort go?

Confirmation  Contradiction  Continuity

Described by Mary Hess, “Teaching and Learning Comparative Theology with Millennial Students.” 55

Kegan: Transformational Learning for Adult Learners

Why?

Confirmation  Contradiction  Continuity
Kegan: Transformational Learning for Adult Learners

With which of these do you most struggle?

- Confirmation
- Contradiction
- Continuity

Kegan: Transformational Learning for Adult Learners

Why?

- Confirmation
- Contradiction
- Continuity

Three Key ‘Locations’

- Institution
- Self
- Students

Location 1

- Catholic
- Immersion
- Universities

- Catholic
- Diaspora
- Universities

- Catholic
- Persuasion
- Universities

- Catholic
- Cohort
- Universities

Location 1

Where does Benedictine fit? How do you know?

From Melanie Morey and John J. Piderit (2006), Catholic Higher Education: A Culture in Crisis
Location 1

Where does Benedictine fit? How do you know?

How does the model of Catholic education embodied by Benedictine influence your teaching practice, particularly when teaching the IDS course?

Location 2

Complete the statements:

Teaching religious content is **the same as** teaching non-religious content to students. **different than**

The reason I see it this way is because:

Location 2

What challenges emerge in the classroom around teaching religious content? (Or, what challenges do we expect to emerge?)

Which of these feel familiar?

Which of these feel out of our comfort zone for handling?

What resources do you need to help handle these challenges?
Think ahead:

Do any of these challenges present you with an opportunity, around which you might want to build a course goal, a classroom activity, or an assignment?

Who are our students as learners?

Who are our students in relation to religious traditions?

Consider each “portrait”:
- Which characteristics are especially salient to your context?
- Are there additions or nuances you would want to add?

What is the culture of learning that is created at the confluence of the institutional, self, and student identities that we’ve named?

What really is involved in confirmation-contradiction-continuity within this culture?

Friday, August 18, 2017
Questions from Yesterday: Did We Get Any Clarity?
- Do I need to decide what I believe when teaching about faith-matters?
- Do I need to tell students what I believe when teaching about faith-matters?
- How should I teach religious texts?
- What role should technology have in the classroom?
- Are millennials really that different?
- Where does lived experience fit when teaching millennials about religion?
- Why do students learn to fear learning?
- How do we get students to see “good” as about love rather than materials?

Backward Design Learning goals are the starting point for course design

Scaffolding Support system the teacher creates to move students toward learning goals

Alignment When the professor’s expectations and students’ expectations are in accord

Backward Design
1. Undertake analysis
2. Set goals
3. Determine evidence
4. Plan learning experiences

Adapted from Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2005), Understanding by Design and Richard S. Aschough (2002), “Designing for Online Distance Education.”

Undertake Analysis
What is the culture of learning that is created at the confluence of the institutional, self, and student identities that we’ve named? What really is involved in confirmation-contradiction-continuity within this culture?

Set Goals
What do I want my students to be able to do after taking my course?

Set Goals
- What do I want my students to know?
- What do I want my students to think?
- What do I want my students to be able to do?
- What do I want my students to feel?
Set Goals

What kinds of things could students do to show that they are enlightened?

Set Goals

After taking this course, students will be enlightened.

Set Goals

What kinds of things could students do to show they are sensitive to poverty and injustice?

Set Goals

After taking this course, students will be sensitive to poverty and injustice.

Set Goals

What kinds of things could students do to show they’ve met these more specific and concrete goals?

Set Goals

Students will be able to...

(An Iterative Process!)

Set Goal

Determine Evidence
Design Learning Experiences

Goal: As a result of taking this course, students will be able to ethically reason about poverty.

Evidence: Students will be able to identify the conditions and factors that account for poverty in a given case, and develop a defensible conclusion about them.

What learning experiences do I need to design to prepare students to do this?

Where's the Assessment?

-- What kinds of experiences do I think students need to have?
-- What do I think they need to read?
-- With whom should they be in conversation?
-- What media should they engage?
-- What opportunities can I create for them to practice?
-- In what order should they do all of this?
Pearls of Assessment Wisdom

"Assessment is so natural that we’ve been doing it all along" (3).

"We can make [decisions about curriculum and classes] with information about student learning or without it" (11).

"The child’s growth comes not from weighing her, but from feeding her" (10).

"The end of assessment is action" (1).

What are the demands of holding Kegan’s cycle of transformational learning together with a backward design strategy?