Professional Development Day Notes January 27, 2017
Alternative Approaches to Assessment
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18 participants

PPT "Alternative approaches to assessment" (available from Tori)

Alison shares quick summary of:

- Formative and summative assessment
- Informal and formal assessment

Group brainstorming of current assessments instructors are using, especially formative/informal assessments we use to see what students know and are learning:

- Kahoot, quizzing app, for low-stakes quizzes. Students love it and it helps the students track their own focus and learning.
- Oral quizzes with open notes. Helps instructor see what student knows and the one-on-one interaction and the use of notes helps instructor convey to student that instructor is on student's side and assessments aren't a gotcha.
- "Brain ball" for a fun way to review what class learned from previous lesson.
- Team assessments.
- Games, like content-based "trivia".

Case #1, whole group brainstorming/discussion:

- Clarify what students are expected to do with the reading assignments.
- Reconsider office hours. Why aren't students coming? What would help? Try something creative.
- Encourage or require individual appointments. Email students between classes and encourage them to email you. Break the ice by emailing them first, first as a whole class and then individually.
- Discussion board for students to share questions between class meetings.
- Cooperative learning with individual assessment.
- Use multiple assignments, not only midterm and final.
- Use hands-on assignments as much as possible.
- Preview essay questions so students can prepare, especially if your goal is to assess what students know versus catching them in wheat they don't know.
- Instructor check own enthusiasm and consider new approaches and assessments. If instructor is bored, students are certainly going to be bored and not perform at their best.

Table groups work on cases #2 and #3 for ~10 minutes and then switch.

Table notes regarding the "Mark" case:

- Give students feedback (written and oral)
- Give students positive reinforcement
- Need to connect with students. Try using technology to communicate.
- Clarify the objectives. Explain the purpose of the lesson/homework.
- Mix up teaching methods but not too many
- Seek mentoring/coaching to use new methods effectively
- Need to balance teaching and assessment methods.

- Make assignments meaningful.
- Teach though modeling. Demonstrate flexibility and openness to student ideas.
- Consider peer feedback and "grading" of low stakes assessments
- Flipping is good, but doesn't always have to be the entire class. Might be effective for a segment of a course.
- Instructor needs to engage collaboratively with students. Try watching video together and discuss afterwards.
- Mix it up: lecture part of the time, facilitate in-class practice part of the time.
- Recognize that group work is hard. Consider breaking up projects into segments/roles (one student drafts, one presents, one proofreads, etc.)
- Monitor group sizes for maximum productivity.
- Give better feedback. Completion is not enough!
- Explain in many formats.

Table notes regarding the "Claire" case:

- Students need practice with feedback. Give feedback on homework.
- Review written copies of student work and look for areas to focus on for upcoming lessons.
- Look at the class from students' perspectives.
- Use friendly competition
- Try "circular problem" strategy where students do one step and then pass to next student
- Instructor needs to consider whether she's in a rut and look for ways to add or adjust methods
- Exit quiz
- Use technology to engage and assess
- Small white boards for small group practice problems
- Chunk the content into smaller units
- Use multiple assessments
- Consider group assessments, different ways to organize this
- Consider open-notes (to encourage students to keep notes) and to encourage students to organize notes, allow use of notes for last 5 minutes of test.

Whole group sharing of ideas from the case discussions. (Notes embedded above.)

Closure and handout RE: Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS) (available from Tori)