

Teaching Unprepared Students

Some Issues to Consider for Chapters 3-6

1. Does “consistent contact” mean that online courses are inappropriate for freshman students or students new to the University?
2. Are “icebreakers” a useful part of our pedagogy or just a fun time-filler?
3. How do we use “participation points” in our classrooms—attendance only, a student-generated question or comment, the one-minute paper, group work with observational protocol, or what?
4. Consider your preferred learning style—take one or more of the on-line learning style inventories listed in chapter 5 and reflect on whether you’re one of those “strong students” Gabriel mentions on p. 58.
5. How difficult is it to move away from the teacher-centered lecture to the type of student engagement Gabriel proposes in chapter 6? What does “thoughtful, intentional mixing of students” (p. 84) look like in the classroom? What sorts of grouping strategies can be helpful?
6. How do we deal with RAD (Resistance, Avoidance, Denial) on the part of students when we aren’t aware what’s happening?
7. What are some ways to assess prior knowledge without making it look like a test?
8. How can a large lecture class become more student-centered? Is it even feasible to attempt such a change?

--Mary Riggs, 3/24/09