

Learning & Teaching Update

Advancing Student Learning Through Communities of Practice



En

From [Gary Pandolfi](#)

Instructional Technologist at Quinnipiac University Sep 10 Friday 10-4

The Social View of Learning



understanding is socially constructed

Idea for Semester 2?

should be able to evaluate their own work as to it's quality. If this is not built into the curriculum, then students become dependent on "what the teacher wants" rather than what they should produce. The result is that every assignment is for the teacher, and nothing is for themselves.

I often ask my students to work in small groups to develop their own rubrics for an assignment. Then give them examples to score based on their rubrics. The differences are astounding. Then we have a class discussion on what is valuable and what isn't. For example: some groups counted grammar as a criterion. The paper with the best argument

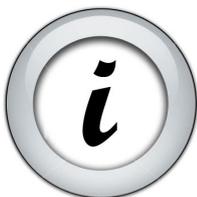
came in last in one group because English was not the writer's first language. Other groups rated it higher because the ideas were solid. Another group gave high marks to a paper that was perfectly grammatically correct, used common examples, and was very easy to read. The fact that it did nothing but regurgitate the content of the article for the most part was not an issue.

In short, we need to wean students away from needing detailed rubrics to check off as they write an essay or complete a project and teach them to develop their own quality standards.

Rubrics can be wonderful; however, at some point students

Students who study in groups, even only once a week, are more engaged in their studies, better prepared for class, and learn significantly more than students who work alone.

From [Gary Pandolfi](#)



May 17 Monday 11-4 Booth College: [Professional Devel Day](#) – Research & Scholarship : all welcome.

June [Student Feedback on Units and Teaching](#) to be administered by Insync

Jul 7-9 [ANZATS 2010](#) Conference Melb The Future of God-Eschatology and the global challenges of future

August? Institutional Moderation of Broken Bay Institute

September? Discipline Moderation — Christian Practice

Sep 10 Friday 10-4 Booth College: Professional Devel Day – Learning & Teaching : all faculty welcome.

Oct 1-3 [Biennial Conference](#) in Philosophy, Religion & Culture CIS Creation, Nature & Built Environment

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At the professional Development Day on 17 May we will modify a process of community formation to develop a model for faculty to assist each other in learning and practising the skills of research and publication.

All members brought and shared writing at each meeting. The group devoted 30 min to each participant's writing, about three double-spaced pages. In the 30 minutes allotted, each writer discussed the larger context of the three pages, told the group what kind of feedback he or she needed, read the pages slowly so that listeners could make notes, and received reader-response feedback. Individuals committed to meeting with the community about every two weeks. They were trained in descriptive reader-response feedback.

Further Reading

The material presented in this newsletter was adapted from the following:

John Seely Brown and Richard P. Adler, Minds on Fire: Open Education, the Long Tail, and Learning 2.0, *EDUCAUSE Review*, vol. 43, no. 1 January/February 2008, 1-19

Diane Gillespie, Nives Dolžak, Bruce Kochis, Ron Krabill, Kari Lerum, Anne Peterson, and Elizabeth Thomas, Research Circles: Supporting the Scholarship of Junior Faculty, *Innovative Higher Education*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2005, 149-162

Annick Janson, Laurie Howard, Michèle Schoenberger-Orgad The Odyssey of PhD Students Becoming a Community, *Business Communication Quarterly*, Volume 67, Number 2, June 2004 168-181

M K Smith, Communities of practice, *the encyclopedia of informal education*, www.infed.org/biblio/communities_of_practice.htm, 2003, 2009



See if you agree with the viewpoint [put here](#). If you disagree how would you modify the steps presented in order to create a community of practice?

This issue of *Learning and Teaching Update* was prepared by [Neil Holm](#), Director (Coursework).

