

College of Arts and Sciences Course Success Group Results: Spring 2015

Groups who participated:

CM 101: Computer Concepts/Applications- Nan Sun and Roberta Jolly

PY 231: Abnormal Psychology- Julie Boydston, Angela Duncan, and Terry Falck

HI 111/112: U.S. History- Tom Averill, Kelly Erby, Rachel Goossen, and Kerry Wynn

PY 100: Basic Concepts in Psychology- Jericho Hockett, Linzi Gibson, Angela Duncan, RaLynn Schmalzried-Schmidt, and Mike Russell

Spanish 101 and 102- Miguel Gonzalez Abellas, Georgina Tenny, Michael O'Brien

HI 100/101/102: World Histories- Kim Morse, Tony Silvestri, Joel Gillaspie, Tom Prasch

MA 116: College Algebra- Sarah Cook, Stephanie Herbster, Beth McNamee, and Janet Sharp

PO 106: Introduction to US Politics- Steve Cann, Bob Beatty, Linsey Moddelmog, Chris Hamilton

PY 151: Psychological Statistics- Jericho Hockett, Linzi Gibson, Mike Russell

CM101 Success Group Summary Report

By Nan Sun and Roberta Jolly, CIS Department

May 5, 2015

We want to thank the Dean's Office for providing this opportunity for colleagues who teach the same class to get together. Roberta Jolly and Nan Sun met three times to discuss CM101: March 24, March 31, and April 14. We first identified the obstacles, then examined existing literature, and finally made some recommendations. Below is a summary of what we discussed.

Obstacles

Some students are under prepared in general. More students are having problems now than in past semesters. We feel some students should be counseled to pursue other programs such as technical or vocational.

Faculty like us were excellent students, which makes it harder for us to understand some of the students' behavior and why some students do not care about learning. The obstacles we observe are the following:

1. Attendance – Some students do not appreciate being in the classroom. This affects the particular students as well as the whole classroom atmosphere. For example, if there is a class of 15 students, and 5 do not attend regularly, it gives a wrong message to other students. They start to wonder why they have to be in the classroom.
2. Listening – Some students do not listen. They have very short attention spans. They want information presented to them in small chunks and very quickly.
3. Not knowing what they don't know - Students think they know, but they don't. It is a challenge to get them to think about what they know and what they do not know. When they encounter tasks unfamiliar to them, some get frustrated and choose not to learn. They easily quit and give up. They will make statements such as: "I am not going to use it", "Why do I have to know this?", or "This is useless".
4. Comprehension – Some students have issues with reading and comprehending instructions. They have difficulty following written instructions. This is really the key to success in this class since students do many tutorials and hands-on exercises. Some of them cannot follow instructions in either verbal or written format even after explanation.
5. Focus – Many students try to multi-task and end up completing the most important task least well. For example, they listen to music or text while they work on assignments.
6. Time management – Some students disregard the due dates. They wait until the last minute to try to get everything done; and, of course, it becomes too much, and they submit inferior work.
7. Apathy towards learning – Some students do not care about learning.

Existing Literature

We reviewed some existing literature and identified the following:

Unprepared student – Faculty should collect and discuss assignments. If we don't, students will think it is okay not to complete the assignments. We should give pop quizzes so students feel they always have to be prepared. Faculty should hold students accountable for their work.

Absent or tardy student – Faculty should spell out their attendance policy in the syllabus. We should let students know how this relates to the real world as they prepare to get into the workforce: they are required to go to work every day, they are required to be on time, they are required to perform well the responsibilities of their positions. In this way, we are helping them role model those behaviors.

We should assign points to attendance and/or let them know how it can affect borderline grades. We can assign random pop quizzes that cannot be made up during the first few minutes of class to encourage students to be on time.

Clueless student – Faculty should establish relevancy. We should ask students what they major in and then tie the class materials to those careers in their majors. We can invite guest speakers to talk about their career decisions and what they wished they had paid more attention to while they were in school. We should initiate some group projects/exercises - build a sense of community in the classroom.

Major literature reviewed:

“Taking back the classroom: tips for the college professor on becoming a more effective teacher”, Delaney J. Kirk, 2008.

“Management of the business classroom”, Edited by Betty J. Brown, Reston, VA: National Business Education Association. 2001.

“E-world: virtual learning, collaborative environments, and future technologies”, Edited by Doris Christopher, Reston, VA: National Business Education Association. 2004.

We also reviewed literature on role-playing and gamification but felt that style of teaching did not fit Roberta and Nan’s. We recognize that although many merits possibly exist, it takes special faculty and students to carry them out. Research conducted and presented by some literature found that gamification in the classroom resulted in little or no improvement of students’ overall test and grade results.

Strategies

We came up with the following recommendations:

To encourage attendance, do pop quizzes, and ask students to sign on the attendance sheet. Write in the syllabus that credit is given for attendance and that it may affect borderline grades.

Tape some lectures and instructions for assignments. When some students have legitimate reasons to be gone; such as, sickness or family problems, these tapes are there for them to catch up on what they miss. If students cannot completely comprehend an assignment, the tapes can help them review the materials at their own pace.

Use some online materials to address multiple learning styles so students have the opportunity to listen, read, and do hands-on at their own pace. Create more exercises that are relevant to the topics being presented as well as disciplines the in which they are majoring.

Do group projects and exercises that help build a sense of community. The students get to know each other and learn from each other. It has the possibility of synergizing everyone on the team

as well as the class. While working on group projects, students get an opportunity to choose topics relevant to their majors/disciplines.

Give students class time to present and discuss current events and new technologies – Apple watch, Google Glass, Google Driverless, DNA for storage, Selfie Boot, smart refrigerator, etc. These current events and technologies can be tied to the topics from the textbook. Do a throwback technology day so students can take the historical perspective and learn to appreciate what we have now.

Instructors shall keep up to date on software we use and teach. With the current rate of change in technology (software, hardware, and courseware); this takes quite a bit of effort.

Course Success Group: PY 231: Abnormal Psychology

Group members: Julie Boydston, Angela Duncan, Terry Falck

Session 1: Identifying Barriers

On March 6th, 2015 we convened to discuss common barriers to success in our abnormal psychology courses. We identified challenges that are related to students and the course itself. Challenges regarding students include the following: lack of attendance, not reading the material/unprepared, not paying attention in class/absorption of the material, lack of time management, untreated mental health issues, students' families "color" their perception of mental illness, misuse or misunderstanding of psychological terms (obsessive, antisocial, etc...), mismatch between "gray area" of what's abnormal and the "black and white" of testing, anonymity among students, unable to catch up after falling behind, inability to expand on answers without being prompted, and difficulty with critical thinking/analysis.

We instructors found the following areas worthy of attention in order to improve the course: needing a clearer framework (psychoanalysis, humanism, biopsychosocial model) to guide the course, conveying depth in course material when there is so much to cover, needing to focus on "common" disorders (anxiety and depression) vs. "rare" disorders (dissociative personality), utilizing technology to aid in student learning, and improving the exam/final exam format.

Session 2: Identifying Solutions

On April 3rd, 2015 we revisited the barriers initially identified and began solution searching, referencing the list of resources received by Margaret Wood. We selected various strategies that would address some key barriers to success in our courses. The strategies include use of case studies, critical thinking cards, selecting the most student-friendly textbook, offering practice before evaluation, redefining the course SLO, and utilizing team-based learning. We believe that offering more case studies would facilitate greater understanding of diagnostic criteria and clarify psychological terms used incorrectly. Regarding student difficulty with critical thinking/analysis, we agreed that critical thinking cards would offer an opportunity to practice this skill. At the same time, students would receive attendance points. We discussed the pros and cons of traditional and open access textbooks as well as entertained the idea of not requiring a textbook, but relying more on lecture, case studies, and online resources. With practice prior to evaluation, we agreed that having low stakes quizzes and in-class activities would allow students more exposure to course material that would facilitate greater understanding of concepts and encourage students to prepare for class. We considered assigning SLO work outside of class and/or using a team-based SLO to assess diversity. The strategy that excited us most is team-based learning because of the potential for decreased anonymity, improved group cohesion, and increased individual responsibility.

Session 3: Implementation, Dissemination, And Evaluation

During the May 11th, 2015 session, we worked toward identifying a clear implementation plan—strategies that we can pilot in our fall courses. We agreed that incorporating a team-based approach in our courses would address several aforementioned challenges. Teams would be

assigned at the beginning of the course and remain the same throughout. The team-based approach would require students to be more prepared for class as they would need to contribute to the group's assigned in-class activity that would be evaluated by the instructor and their peers. We discussed the possibility of assigning "roles" to each group member to increase the accountability of each student involved and foster an atmosphere of teamwork and camaraderie. We decided that each instructor would dictate what kind of team-based approach he/she wanted to pilot this fall whether it be case-based learning, practice before evaluation activities, creating case vignettes, working as a team to correctly identify the answers to commonly missed exam items, etc... To evaluate our chosen approaches, we will identify changes in student attendance and exam scores. We considered having students serve as their own controls during the semester to monitor outcomes.

At this time, we have decided to delay any alterations to the SLO requirement in order to determine whether any of our new approaches may also be good options for the SLO. We have also decided to hold off on a common textbook selection as there are currently limited open access resources for abnormal psychology. We plan to share results from our piloted approaches at future departmental faculty meetings and at a future success group C-TEL event.

CAS Course Success Group
U.S. History
Final Report
Spring 2015

This semester, our U.S. History Course Success group convened three times to discuss the opportunities for student success presented by the U.S. History survey courses (HI 111 and HI 112). Our group included Tom Averill, Kelly Erby, Rachel Goossen, and Kerry Wynn. After assessing the data provided by CAS, we proceeded from the premise that these courses were not particularly problematic, but that there is always room to improve upon our current practice. We discovered that all of us are continuously seeking to enhance the learning environment for students and we are all dedicated to promoting historical understanding and pedagogical development. However, we realized that we do not speak with each other about teaching history as much as we would like. We appreciate the opportunity to reflect critically on our teaching methods. We also appreciate the freedom we have within our departments to make individual decisions about our courses, and with this in mind, those of us who teach HI 111/112 have each selected areas upon which we would like to focus in the upcoming year. Our individual resolutions for 2015-16 appear below.

Kelly Erby: After reflecting on how I teach HI 112 in the course success group, I want to think more about the big questions I want my class to answer for students. Students will not remember facts and dates for long, but they might remember answers to meaningful questions and the critical thinking skills they honed in coming to these answers. When I teach the class in the fall, I will organize the content around two central questions: 1) In what ways did American practices fail to live up to American values during second half of U.S. history? and 2) What were some of the different strategies proposed and adopted to try to address these inconsistencies between American practices and values? How effective were these approaches?

Rachel Goossen: The course success groups were valuable to me in that we shared ideas about increasing class participation through discussion. Next semester, I plan to try at least three techniques that we discussed. The first, suggested by Tom Averill, is to launch a class discussion by having students come up and write on the whiteboard a key question or idea based on an assigned reading, and then ask students to explain why they wrote the items listed on the board. The second, based on demonstrations I've seen in other history teachers' classrooms, is to explore the "Socratic Circle" method of analyzing an assigned primary source. (This requires students, in two groups, to observe and analyze the quality of each other's discussions, based on a structured activity in which the teacher facilitates, but does not lead the discussion.) Finally, I plan to explore the possibility of introducing a simulation into my HI 112 classroom teaching (a method I used successfully years ago with the HI 111 class). In the coming year, I'll share my experiences with these learner-centered techniques in conversations with my faculty colleagues.

Kerry Wynn: In the spring semester of 2015, I reorganized HI 111 to include a series of "History Labs," assignments that would require students to engage in more extended analysis of primary sources. In 2015-16, I plan to undertake a more extensive renovation of the lecture material that underpins the labs and many discussions in the course. In our course success group, we focused a great deal on student engagement and encouraging students to come to class

prepared and to participate. My goal is to increase student interest through the inclusion of more biographical material in lecture. I will use individual lives to anchor the narrative and elucidate major trends, rather than beginning with the trends at an abstract level.

As we embark upon these efforts, we will continue to engage in discussions about teaching and student success. It is our hope that we become more collaborative, both within the History Department and with others on campus with similar specialties. Tom Averill's participation was very beneficial to this group, as his use of pedagogical strategies in another context allowed us a fresh perspective on the U.S. history survey courses.

PY100 Course Success Group

For our Session 1 meeting, we discussed specific issues, based on our experiences teaching PY100, that may contribute to the overall problem in PY100: the DFW rate.

For our Session 2, Part 1, we first identified potential solutions based on our own experiences, familiarity with the SOTL literature, familiarity with the psychological literature, and information gained by some faculty at recent teaching conferences/events. Session 2, Part 1 solutions are summarized below in relation to specific problems.

For our Session 2, Part 2, we then identified potential solutions based on the resources provided by Margaret/CTEL, with each Group member responsible to explore resources pertaining to specific areas. Many of these resources provided directions relevant to multiple problem areas; thus, these solutions are not specifically tied to any one problem area. Session 2, Part 2 solutions are summarized in a separate Word document to include linked information.

Students not using the Mastery Lab and other resources (e.g., TAs, office hours, tutoring)

- Make X# of Mastery Lab visits required, enable students to generally choose how to use it: mastery quizzes, critical thinking practice and actual assessments, tutoring, brief reflection activities (efficacy of this approach TBA after analysis of pilot testing from last semester!)

Challenges assessing critical thinking--difficult to do thoroughly in limited time

- Assess online or in Mastery Lab--this would get students into the lab and the TAs are already trained on delivering and scoring the assessments; follow the VIPER approach (Vivid Examples, Integration, Participation, Examination, and Repetition)

Student buy-in/connection/relevance

- Incorporate student leaders in the class--either currently enrolled (those with higher GPAs, Exam 1 scores, etc.) or develop Undergraduate Learning Assistant program/Teaching of Psychology Course for upper-level star students to earn credit/gain experience; Get students to participate by providing positive reinforcement (e.g., Big Brain Bucks that can be traded in on specific quiz items); Inject pop culture into the classroom with blogs, podcasts, videos, and comedy; Decrease anonymity by learning all students' names, providing "individualized" feedback early and often for all levels of performance

Bimodal distributions

Mastery Quizzes--students not taking them when optional, maybe too specific to be useful

- Narrow down pool of questions from which quiz items are drawn; change from optional to required; make quizzes available at home (using time limits of 1.5 minutes per question, 1 question per page, no backtracking, more limited window of days in which to take them)

Study guide expectations

- Offer study guides, be specific

Class times--8 am sections and 1-3:30 sections tend to do less well regardless of semester/instructor; may reflect problem among students but these times may also be difficult for instructors

Getting students to revisit the info (e.g., read, review)

- Use clickers or smart phone technology to test immediate understanding, implement demos/activities, conduct anonymous opinion polls, incorporate peer teaching, and award participation points

Teaching to a range of cognitive levels and majors

Non-traditional student study and test-taking skills are often challenging; these students often ask for exceptions

- Special PY100 section that is smaller? That has more flexibility built into it? Use options for earning points (i.e., as long as they get X amount of points, how they do it is up to them)?

Clarity of course direction

- First day: summarize psych findings (from peer-reviewed and popular press articles) relevant to the range of students' majors to show why psych is important; Offer sections with different emphases (e.g., a section of PY100 for math/science/engineering majors taught by Linzi, who specializes in cognitive and neuro psych; a section for nursing/kinesiology majors taught by Angela, who specializes in health psych; a section for sociology/anthropology/applied studies taught by me, who specializes in social psych)?

Some topics more difficult to teach than others, given instructors' areas of expertise

- Team teaching by expert? More flexibility to replace some topics with others?

Session 2 Summary, Part 2: Identifying Solutions Others Have Tried

For this meeting, we identified potential solutions based on the resources provided by Margaret/CTEL. Each of us was responsible to explore the resources pertaining to particular areas, as follows:

Jericho: Critical Thinking, Psychology-Specific, Feedback, Authentic Assessment, Problem Based Learning

Jeff Skillman (book rep): Online resources for the textbook

RaLynn: Millennial Learners, Course Direction/Focus, Content/Pace

Mike: General Best Practices/Teaching Resources

Linzi: Metacognition, Study Skills, Active Learning

Angela: Adult Learners, Student Motivation, How People Learn

Note: Many of these resources provided directions relevant to multiple problem areas; thus, these solutions are not specifically tied to any one problem area.

Note: Although many good ideas were shared and we plan to implement several of them, each member of the Course Success Group also provided a specific group-level challenge (indicated by “Challenge”).

Jericho: Critical thinking is our most important SLO; however, our sometimes focus on the minutiae of each topic may overwhelm students and suggest that we expect them to know and remember every detail.

To better emphasize critical thinking as a key component of the course, we can highlight it on our syllabi.

We should explicitly define critical thinking to our students on day 1 to orient them to the course and dispel inaccuracies about what critical thinking is.

To encourage critical thinking, we should strive to incorporate traditional assessments (e.g., multiple choice exams) and authentic assessments (i.e., focused on performing a task vs. selecting a response, relevant to real life vs. contrived, emphasizing construction/application vs. recall/recognition, student-structured vs. teacher-structured, and resulting in direct vs. indirect evidence of learning, such as with Conceptests). Here are three examples of authentic assessment activities: 1) Behavior Modification Project; 2) Lesson Plan Analysis; 3) Social Psychology Demonstration (also see Projects and Activities from Linzi’s NITOP presentation: build a Facebook page for a character with a psychological disorder; make a public service announcement based on what you’ve learned about X; complete a personality inventory for a popular TV character)

We can also make the relevance of critical thinking more obvious throughout the semester rather than solely during SLO Assessment assignments by using a problem-based learning approach: 1) introduce an “ill-structured problem” at the beginning of class (i.e., open-ended; requires more than just the available info; contains multiple solution paths; changes as new info is obtained; generates interest, controversy, and questions; complex enough to require collaboration and thinking beyond recall; contains discipline-authentic content); 2) provide questions related to the problem to small groups; 3) string out the details of the problem throughout the class period to build suspense; 4) assess progress in answering the questions at regular intervals, interrupting to correct misconceptions or provide guidance; and 5) allow time for discussion at the end of the session or beginning of the next class period. Use the task prompts in Figure 3 as question stems throughout the class period—they address the skills involved in the critical thinking process! Challenge: Revise at least 1 class period to incorporate a critical/problem-based/authentic approach and devise an assessment rubric for it.

Jeff: Launchpad, an online system for the textbook, may be useful to encourage forced repetition/exposure to class material.

Some key elements of Launchpad include a live RSS for Scientific American (could be incorporated into SLO Assessments), a widget that can be added to D2L to integrate the material without additional logins, Learning Curve (a formative, self-paced assessment tool that links to the e-book in each page of content and provides individualized study plans), Concepts in Action (a formative assessment tool comprised of quick interactive activities and follow-up quizzes to promote mastery), a Video Tool Kit, Supplementary Study Materials, and Analytics (to assess time spent on activities and #s of attempts).

Students can have a free 21-day trial for Launchpad, so they don't have to purchase it in case they decide to drop the class early on.

RaLynn: In the world of Google, students want answers, not ambiguity—we need to frame our courses to support and challenge this worldview.

Challenge: Frame the course by offering “essential questions” the course tries to answer from different perspectives woven throughout the semester (e.g., How can we be better learners? □ Address specifically in sections on memory, learning, goals, etc.)

Decrease the number of modules covered, and incorporate the modules that are cut into other areas

Humanize the research: using just the introduction from an actual article, have students create concept maps—tie these key concepts into later lectures; later, using just the methods section from the same article, have students cartoon participant procedures; later, present students with graphs/figures from that article's results and lead them in interpreting them (no stats—make sure graphs/figures give all needed info); later, form a “grant panel” on the article's future research directions; throughout, connect to “essential questions”

Mike: Students are a reflection of us—we should not forget the student-instructor interaction effect on their learning outcomes.

Offer daily “big picture” reading quizzes/critical reflections in which students summarize the main point. These can sometimes be solo activities, team assignments, or take-home activities. Make these ~20% of their final grade so that they have a low-stakes opportunity to gain more contact with the material while decreasing their anxiety about it; you can also use these to track attendance.

Use “Readiness Assessment Tests” prior to exams, in which students receive 2-3 open-ended “so what” questions, or questions about the most interesting or least understood concept from a class period or section of material.

Challenge: Reflect on the “Seven Principles of Good Practice”—identify your areas of strength and of weakness.

Linzi: Students and instructors can use meta-cognition to improve learning and teaching. Use the meta-cognitive questions from Table 1 as prompts, in assignments, on quizzes, etc. Provide students with a thorough introduction/overview at the start of each lecture.

To help students self-monitor their own meta-cognitive processes, conclude lectures by asking “So what?” to specifically address the big picture, self-application, and relationship of the material to students’ other areas of learning. Also include a wrap-up slide at the end of each lecture to help students evaluate what is important and to decrease early pack-up.

Engage students in active learning by asking them to write the muddiest point (or the clearest point) on an index card at the conclusion of a lecture or section—this will give them permission to be confused and face ambiguity, and will help identify points the instructor needs to clarify. Draw samples out of a fishbowl to read and address in class.

Ask students to engage in an expressive writing task about how they feel about the exam before taking it, being careful not to prime them for negative affect—this will give them the opportunity to distress before diving in.

Ask students to engage in post-quiz/exam reflections on what study strategies worked well and what strategies didn’t—this will encourage meta-cognition about their learning processes.

Apply meta-cognitive strategies from Table 2 for instructor self-evaluation.

After the section on learning/memory, create an assignment in which students apply the concepts to reflect on and improve their own study strategies and habits.

Use concepttests as a meta-cognitive strategy during exams.

To get students to read before class, 1) less is more; 2) preview the reading in class, giving guiding questions and hinting at cool things it covers; 3) revisit the reading in class after it is due; 4) use low-stakes testing of the reading prior to class, and include reading questions on exams; 4) overtly teach good reading strategies (e.g., highlighting doesn’t help!)

Challenge: Employ at least one student-focused and one instructor-focused meta-cognitive strategy.

Angela: Students need to value the information they’re being taught, to believe they can succeed, and to receive helpful and frequent feedback.

To get students to value the information, we should make it relevant, applicable, and tied to their majors.

To help students believe they can succeed, we should teach them specific success strategies, we should emphasize the role of effort vs. inherent smarts in learning, and we should foster early success (e.g., by making Mastery Quizzes easier).

Adult learners in particular may delay seeking help and have other foci besides school. For both this group and other students, we can offer them choices for how to earn points (e.g., complete 8 of the 10 available activities) and provide lots of opportunities to earn points. We can also encourage them to think about how this course will meet their needs (which may differ from the needs of traditional learners).

Use a learning journal (e.g., the dollar blue books) to allow students to reflect on info, apply it, and meta-cognate for the last five minutes of class. These can be collected and monitored by TAs for every class period.

Ask students to develop case studies—selecting from a range of topics—by drawing on their own experiences. These can be used as illustrations in subsequent classes!

Require students to work with librarians to find short articles on some psychological topics most relevant to their majors.

To improve exam success, use shorter and more frequent Mastery Quizzes; consider letting students use a “cheat sheet” on the first exam.

Challenge: Assess students’ motivation early and often.

Session 3 Summary: Implementation, Dissemination, Evaluation

For this meeting, we devised a plan to improve success, including long-term/programmatic and shorter-term/individual strategies. We will evaluate whether our findings lead to improved success by comparing DFW rates and course grades from Fall 2015 PY100 sections to those in previous semesters, as well as through individual reflection and group discussion. We will disseminate our findings to faculty in our department via professional development-focused faculty meetings.

Develop Undergraduate Learning Assistant program in Psychology (Jericho) and pilot test in the fall (Jericho and Linzi).

Develop Launchpad shell to share among instructors (Jericho and Jeff).

Revise at least 1 class period to incorporate a critical/problem-based/authentic approach and devise an assessment rubric for it (All).

Frame the course by offering “essential questions” the course tries to answer from different perspectives woven throughout the semester (e.g., -How can we be better learners? --> Address specifically in sections on memory, learning, goals, etc.) (All).

Reflect on the “Seven Principles of Good Practice”—identify you areas of strength and of weakness (All).

Employ at least one student-focused and one instructor-focused meta-cognitive strategy (All).

Identify a way to assess students' motivation (Angela).

Assess students' motivation early and often (All).

Course Success Groups

Department: Modern Languages

Courses analyzed: Spanish 101 and 102

Group Members: Miguel González Abellás, Georgina Tenny, Michael O'Brien

Our group met for all three sessions. The following is a summary of each session.

Session 1

The group identified a wide variety of possible obstacles for success in Spanish 101 and/or Spanish 102. While there were several ideas discussed, they can more easily be summarized in the following six groupings which were sent to C-Tel as requested:

- **Students' lack of time and motivation outside of class-**Students often lack the time and/or motivation outside of class needed to acquire a foreign language. This is likely due to other personal commitments such as work, personal responsibilities, etc. In order to be proficient in the language, students should ideally have contact with the language every day, both in and outside the classroom.
- **Large class sizes-** Due to the interactive nature of language learning, students need to converse with classmates and the instructor as often as possible. Large class sizes can impede the frequency with which an instructor can interact with individuals to ascertain their comprehension and speaking skills. Furthermore, large class sizes for foreign languages are not in line with the standards supported by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (following the NEA and ADFL recommendations), which favor limiting class size to 15 students whenever possible (<http://www.actfl.org/news/position-statements/maximum-class-size-0>).
- **Study habits-** Learning a foreign language requires students to study grammar, vocabulary, as well as practice their reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. Some students are not aware of the best way to study for their foreign language class or others may feel overwhelmed by the amount of new information. This ultimately is an issue of organization and learning which study habits will work best for each student.
- **Waiting too long to take a foreign language class-** Students are often waiting too long to take their first foreign language class, while others are allowing too much time to pass between their first class (either in high school or here at Washburn) and their second class. This ultimately leads to students needing to re-learn many of the basic concepts that were covered in previous courses.
- **Variety of levels in the same class-** Despite having a series of suggested guidelines, students are currently placing themselves at the class level that they see fit. This often leads to classes where there is a mix of some students that have never studied the language before, while others have had several years of the language. This can often be discouraging for the true beginners, and can slow down the progress of more advanced students.

- **Students' experience with the language and expectations of a college-level language course-** This obstacle is somewhat connected with obstacles 1 and 3 listed above. Students are often not expecting the amount of memorization and practice required for college-level language learning. This is especially true when compared with previous high-school experiences, which may have varied greatly from one high school to the next.

Session 2

In preparation for session 2, group members consulted the materials and articles provided by C-Tel and also contacted other institutions of higher education to learn more about their programs. The group discussed a variety of options for addressing some of the aforementioned obstacles. Here is a summary of some of the proposed suggestions whose advantages and disadvantages were discussed:

- Increase the class to a 5 credit hour class. This would give students more time to absorb the material and give more time for mastery of concepts and skills. Other institutions of higher learning are currently using the 5 credit hour model for basic language courses.
- Limit class sizes. Ideally, the instructor would have time to have substantial interaction (speaking and listening) with each student during a class period. Reducing class size would greatly improve the quality of time dedicated to each student and would be more in-line with other institutions in the area which limit student enrollment to 20 students per class in the basic language classes. Our current classes allow for 25 students. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (following the NEA and ADFL recommendations) supports limiting class size to 15 students whenever possible (<http://www.actfl.org/news/position-statements/maximum-class-size-0>).
- Give students a course syllabus quiz. This would ensure that all students understood the expectations of the course, as well as all of the resources available in their book and through their online workbook program.
- Give students more regular quizzes/pop quizzes between exams. This will help to ensure that students are reviewing the class material on a daily basis instead of right before test days. It would also allow for students to more regularly assess their progress.
- Include more cultural activities throughout the lessons. Students are often interested in the cultural information about Spanish-speaking countries. Including more activities based around cultural information will not only provide more information to students, but also spark greater motivation and interest in the application of the language.
- Require attendance at a specific number of cultural events on campus or in the community (talks, conversation tables, Spanish club). While lack of time is an issue for students, additional contact with the language and culture of the Spanish-speaking world would be beneficial for them.
- Create a Spanish-speaking cultural fair for Washburn students, as well as for local high school students. This would not only spark our students' interest in the language and

culture, but would do the same for future students as well, who may begin taking classes at an early stage in their time at Washburn.

- Utilize technology to reach out to students and reinforce what they are learning. This could be done through a variety of social media.
- Require students to write a personal diary/synthesis activity at the end of each lesson, thus allowing for the exploration of individual interests and self-expression with the language.

Session 3

In session 3 we discussed which of the suggestions from session 2 would work. While all suggestions have potential, we divided the list of suggestions into items that we could implement immediately (next year), and other suggestions which could be implemented at a future time (after further study or proper approval). Here are both categories:

Items which can be implemented immediately the next time the course is taught:

- Ask students to take a course policies quiz at the beginning of the semester in order for them to better understand course expectations and available resources for success.
- More pop quizzes to promote proper study habits/daily study of the language. This will also allow students to more regularly measure their own progress in any given lesson instead of waiting for the test given at the end of the lesson.
- Ask students to create a diary and/or synthesis activity at the end of each lesson which allows students to personally or creatively demonstrate their mastery of the material from each lesson.
- Include more culture in the daily grammar activities and on the exams to promote student interest and motivation.
- Require attendance at a specific number of cultural events to motivate student interest in the language and the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world.

Items which need to be investigated further and possibly implemented in the future:

- Reducing class sizes/putting a limit on the number of students able to enroll in any one section of the basic language classes (Spanish 101 and Spanish 102).
- Options for increasing the course to a 5 credit hour course.
- A Spanish-language cultural fair, bringing together students from several schools to participate and promote the Spanish language and the cultural practices of the Spanish-speaking world.
- The use of technology to reach out to students and reinforce classroom material.

Course Success Group on World Histories (HI 100, HI 101, HI 102)

Participants: Kim Morse, Tony Silvestri, Joel Gillaspie, Tom Prasch

Meeting 1: Outlining the Issues

We identified a range of obstacles in world-history surveys, including: Critical-thinking skills, especially in relation to writing skills (including weak thesis statements; inability to think critically about sources rather than just summarize them); degraded basic study skills, including reading, note-taking; limited commitment and buy-in to course materials (many students seeming content to just get through); weak understanding of geography; and students coming in with bad history (often limited to US history, often with bad approaches to historical interpretation, so that we can presume no base knowledge as a starting point, and often with high-school grade inflation leaving students with out-of-balance expectations). In relation to these issues, we also discussed difficulties with textbooks, with suitable primary sources, and with finding the balance between content delivery and necessary remediation. Although these issues were shared by all three surveys, we also agreed that HI 102 (Modern World) presented particular difficulties, in terms of managing the huge amount and wide range of content; Kim Morse even suggested we consider a four-part divide, although that presents additional difficulties (especially in terms of adding hours to the major or leaving out one part of history to keep the hours the same).

Meeting 2: Sharing Contacts with Others

Joel discussed world-history teaching with several British history colleagues at a recent conference. (All taught two-semester world sequences; all taught the second half.) They shared many of the same difficulties (critical-thinking skills, lack of background in history, geographical ignorance, poor writing skills.) The shared approach of Joel's colleagues was to use empire as a framing discourse for the course.

We immediately dismissed this as hopelessly narrowing, both temporally and spatially. Tom discussed a Texas-based colleague's experience (again, an institution using a two-course sequence; she taught in the modern half). She shared many of the same issues with lack of knowledge, poor core skills, history background limited to US; she added that students often did not understand the relevance of history. Two tactics she had employed to deal with these problems were: first, to teach the course backward, beginning in the present where students might have a connection (she reported this was difficult but rewarding in terms of student attendance and engagement); and second, to use community engagement as a means to make connections (the example she gave was framing literacy as a central theme and then having students volunteer with an adult literacy group).

We found these examples interesting, while noting they worked far better for HI 102 than for HI 100 or HI 101.

Tony consulted several web-based links on history curriculum, in which he found a consistent emphasis on the need to underline core themes or issues for courses. He also talked with a colleague at UMKC (two-part world survey, not required of majors outside education; also, as in our case, part of a recently reworked general-education system) who expressed significant

discontent with the surveys: problems of student engagement and levels of student understanding; unhappiness with the commitment of those who taught it (most of the faculty did not); and the familiar issues of critical-thinking and writing skills. Among their solutions was to push a heavily interdisciplinary approach, sometimes in conjunction with team-taught sections. They were also considering going back to Western Civ instead.

We rejected that last option as hopelessly retrograde; noted that we already had a strongly interdisciplinary emphasis in our own courses but that team-teaching for all surveys was not likely viable beyond Tony's World History & Music course. We noted, too, that we already had, built into each course in the sequence, a clear central theme (the invention of civilization in HI 100, the creation of world connections in the wake of the Age of Exploration in HI 101, globalization and global interconnectedness in HI 102), but that we could do far more to underline and reiterate them.

Kim discussed the issue with a Latin Americanist colleague (again, two-part sequence). Familiar issues came up: critical-thinking skills and reading/writing skills were lacking. The need to emphasize core themes and to provide a coherent organization of information were key issues. We concluded the meeting by noting that the evidence suggested we were ahead of the game in several respects: in using a three-part division (which, as much difficulty as it may present for transfers, allowed a much less rushed and gapped presentation of material), in having an emphatic commitment to the worldness of world history (as opposed to the imperialists, or the wannabe-Western-Civ sorts). We also, of course, shared a common set of problems with professors of history at other schools. For the next meeting, we would explore ERIC and other websites to think about solutions.

Meeting 3: Looking for Solutions

We decided they would all do more to underline and re-emphasize core themes for each course: not just mentioning them in syllabi & first lectures, but reiterated them at regular intervals, working them into test questions, etc. Kim also suggested a stronger emphasis be placed on making connections between the past and the present, including news-driven assignments, discussions, and quizzes.

Tony will experiment this coming semester with teaching HI 102 backwards and report back. Tom will be trying an in-class collective essay-writing experiment—having the whole class work together to write an essay, which will at least reinforce the notion of essays being more than a paragraph, give some guidelines on thesis writing, and some pointers on essay organization—in a class period before the first test.

Kim will be experimenting with having students design some of their own test questions. We will all report back on outcomes.

Course Success group for MA 116 College Algebra

Met from 2:15-4:00 on Wednesday, February 25. All members (Sarah Cook, Stephanie Herbst, Beth McNamee, and Janet Sharp) were present.

The group had a lively discussion regarding teacher frustrations with student success in MA 116. The group identified the following items, in no particular order, as obstacles to student success:

Session 1

1. Student motivation/attendance

- This was first brought up in the context of a “terminal versus non-terminal math student” in MA 116. The group discussed whether it would be worthwhile to explore two different versions of MA 116: one version for those needing to simply satisfy their math requirement and another for students who will be taking more math/science classes. The group recognized that there are logistical issues with this. What if students’ change majors? What if students enroll in the wrong version because it fits their schedule better?
- There was discussion on whether students need MA 116 to be successful in their major. We have heard stories of students who leave MA 116 as the very last class for their degree. If this is the case, is MA 116 really necessary for the degree? Would MA 112 be a better option and if so, how do we get more students to take MA 112? Although not mentioned at the meeting, previous conversations with group members mentioned major-specific sections of MA 116 with real-world examples pertaining to their respective major. This would be an even larger logistical issue than a terminal vs. non-terminal option.
- The group members expressed concern that students’ lack of motivation for the course may be somewhat inherited from their faculty advisor. Is MA 116 presented by advisors as just a check on their requirements? Are students told to “get it over with”? Do other departments use MA 116 as a weed-out course for their majors? One member of the group mentioned they had heard third-hand that a faculty advisor had suggested a student take College Algebra at Allen County instead of Washburn because it is easier.

2. Student background knowledge

- Does MA 103/104 provide students with the skills to pass MA 116? The pass rates for MA 103 and MA 104 are as dismal as MA 116 so it does not seem like we could add more material to the course(s). Both MA 103 and MA 104 follow the Kansas Board of Regents Common Course Competency list. We cannot dramatically change the content of these courses and still adhere to the competencies.
- Should the department look for another option as a pre-College algebra course? Perhaps a College algebra prep class? A different course would have transfer issues, but would allow us to get away from the KBOR Competency list.

3. Student lack of organization/study skills

- All members acknowledged that students need to do math in order to learn math. The group's perception is that too many students try to memorize and mimic their way through math without really understanding it. How do we help them learn how to study?
- All MA 116 sections give their students a common set of problems from the textbook to work on through the semester. This list may overwhelm students. Also, most instructors collect only a subset of these problems. Should this list be shortened (maybe 10 problems per text section)? Should all instructors collect and grade every one of these problems? Should all homework be graded with a common point-scale?
- Along the same lines with the homework list, should we maintain a larger list of problems but instead have them designated as 'required' and 'recommended'?
- The group also discussed the use of computer-based homework systems. The Department recently had presentations given by two vendors: MyMathLab and Hawkes Learning System. The Department previously used MyMathLab as a homework component. The interface with this system was not ideal. Some faculty were outspoken about eliminating MyMathLab so it was discontinued. Did the Department not use MyMathLab effectively? It seems that a computerized system is a good way for students to receive immediate feedback and/or more practice opportunities. Other institutions claim success with computerized homework systems, but the group is concerned that with these successes came other sacrifices (no written exams, multiple test redos, etc).
- It was mentioned that students do not see homework as practice exam problems. Students think of homework only as an item to complete on a checklist. Would students take homework problems more seriously if they were on a handout rather than from the textbook? What about a workbook? Are there publishers that have workbooks available? Or would a publisher create/customize a workbook for us?

4. Students do not get help when needed

- The group discussed campus tutoring and whether or not this is an effective way for students to obtain help. Until the Morgan construction, there was tutoring directly across the hall from the Math Department. It was not uncommon for faculty to walk into the Tutor Center and help their own students (or others). With tutoring only in the library, the faculty have lost this opportunity. However, admittedly student success rate has been about the same whether there was tutoring in Morgan or not.
- Do students trust the tutors? All members of the group have heard 'horror stories' about tutoring from students (both Math Department Tutoring and Library Tutoring). We have also all had students who praised the tutors. What is the perception of tutoring across campus? Do some students stay away from tutoring because of rumors they have heard?

- Students are reluctant to come to office hours. This has been particularly true since the Morgan construction started, but it was an issue before construction as well. Do students perceive that our faculty don't care about their success? Although there is some consistency with MA 116 instructors, there is also a cohort of instructors who teach MA 116 on a non-regular basis. Would a consistent teacher base make students more comfortable? Most MA 116 instructors are full-time, but we do regularly scramble to find adjuncts to cover evening and/or afternoon classes. Adjuncts do not have their own offices and do not hold office hours. Should they be required to hold office hours? Adjunct pay is extremely low. Would required office hours push them away?

5. Class pace and/or content

- Students consistently comment on teaching evaluations that the class has a lot of information and/or goes too fast. Members of the group discussed that there may be topics in MA 116 that could/should be eliminated. This would cause issues with the KBOR competency list. Also, the group discussed that math faculty world-wide hesitate at eliminating any material from any course...this is perceived as “dummying down”. Our department is no different and eliminating topics would be a hard-sell to some faculty. Even if topics were “officially” eliminated, some faculty may choose to cover them in their sections anyway.
- Would test retakes be helpful to students? In MA 103 and MA 104, instructors have the option to let their class do a test-redo on the last day of regular classes. Some instructors offer this to students and some do not. What if this were offered in MA 116? Would faculty give the option to their students or would faculty believe this compromised the integrity of the course? Even if a retake was allowed, would students take advantage? Many MA 103/MA 104 students choose not to do a retake exam or do not study for the retake and do worse than on the first exam attempt. There was concern that students may intentionally do bad on their first exam attempt in order to see specifically what to study. There was discussion on only allowing a percentage of points to be earned back on a retake exam.
- On the topic of test retakes, faculty may be more open to allowing retakes in MA 116 since it is still required that students take and pass the final exam (with no retake) IF they did not have to administer/proctor the retakes. It would be more convenient if retakes could be done outside of class time, perhaps in a testing facility.
- After the meeting, there was a suggestion that maybe MA 116 should be spread out over two semesters, perhaps an MA 115/MA 116 option. MA 115 would cover the first half of the traditional MA 116. There would be special sections of MA 116 that required an MA 115 prerequisite. These sections would only cover the second half of the traditional MA 116 material. Students who took MA 116 in a two semester sequence would still need to take and pass the final exam over the entire two-semester information.

Session 2

The Course Success group for MA 116 College Algebra met from 2:00-3:30 on Friday, April 3. All members (Sarah Cook, Stephanie Herbster, Beth McNamee, and Janet Sharp) were present.

The group reported on other institutions they had contacted regarding their algebra courses and success rates. Members of the group reported on several institutions, including Fort Hayes State, Emporia State, New Mexico State, Northern Arizona, Oregon State, Northern Colorado, University of Colorado, Austin Community College, Kansas State, Pittsburgh State, UMKC, Edinborough Community College, and Moorehead State.

The group was a little exasperated in that they didn't think any of the other institutions had found "the" solution. There were some ideas taken from some of these institutions that seemed like they might fit in well at Washburn. The group decided to mull over what had been presented and discuss how we could implement a plan for Washburn at our next meeting.

Session 3

The Course Success group for MA 116 College Algebra met from 2:00-3:30 on Wednesday, April 22 and again from 2:00-3:30 on Wednesday, April 29 to formulate an action plan for Washburn's algebra sequence. All members (Sarah Cook, Stephanie Herbster, Beth McNamee, and Janet Sharp) were present.

The group believes the following should be implemented in the short term. The group also believes that our suggestions will take a lot of time and that the faculty members developing these changes should receive some compensation. The group met with Dr. Stephenson regarding this and will be sending her a funding request shortly. The suggested changes are:

- As coordinator, Dr. Cook will carefully examine the Core Competency list from the Kansas Board of Regents and compare this to what we are currently teaching in MA 116. The group believes there are places where we could eliminate a topic altogether and/or places where we could streamline the types of problems typically assigned for a given topic.
- Similarly, Dr. Cook will also re-examine the list of topics and problem sets for MA 103 and MA 104 and compare these to the Kansas Board of Regents Core Competency list. It is hoped that these problem sets can also be streamlined.
- Changes to the problem sets in MA 103, MA 104, and MA 116 will necessitate changes to the final exam reviews for these three courses and subsequently will require new files with solutions to the review problems. These files would be created by Dr. Cook. Ideally, Dr. Cook will replace the videos of solutions to the current MA 116 final exam review with new videos and create videos showing solutions to the MA 103 and MA 104 final exam review problems.
- Ms. Herbster and Ms. McNamee will create worksheets for MA 116 and MA 104 respectively. The worksheets will contain additional problems for the students to

turn in for grading. The group believes that students will take problems on worksheets more seriously than problems taken from the text book. To test this, both instructors will use worksheets in only one section of their course and use only textbook problems in the other section. If the results show that students using worksheets performed better in the class, then we would like to expand using worksheets in all of the 104 and 116 courses and also look at developing them for MA 103.

- For the MA 116 final exam, Dr. Cook will strongly encourage the group of faculty who teach the course to agree to a final exam that addresses the minimum required knowledge needed to pass the course. In particular, Dr. Cook will push for having more problems that target a single skill rather than problems that require multiple steps. The group expects there will be opposition to this from some, if not the majority, of the other faculty. Although Dr. Cook coordinates the course, the final exam is co-written by the faculty who teach the course so it is unclear if these changes can be agreed upon.

The group believes that the Department should look into these options for long-term goals:

- Currently all Fall/Spring math classes are traditional 15-week courses. When students have to drop a math course, they have no option but to wait until the next term to try the course again. We believe students would have a better chance at being successful if they spent the remainder of the semester where they dropped the course doing some preparatory work in mathematics. For example, perhaps the out-of-sequence course would cover only the first half of the course that the student dropped. The student would then effectively be re-doing what they had already done in their original course and would hopefully get a better grasp on this material during the out-of-sequence course. The Department would need to consider whether this type of course should be offered face-to-face or online. The group strongly believes that face-to-face is a better option, but we understand it may be unrealistic to think that students who drop courses that meet at different days/times would have the same time slot available for an out-of-sequence course that begins mid-semester.
- The Department has recently been offering a section of MA 116 that meet five days a week. Our group believes this is a step in the right direction. The group believes that the five-day-a-week course should continue to be option and believes the Department should offer more sections of this course.
- The group suggests that the Department consider running sections of MA 104 that meet five days a week. This would give students the option of taking only the five hour MA 104 compared to taking both three hours of MA 103 and three hours of MA 104. It would also give students who struggled with MA 103 a chance to take MA 104 at a slower pace.
- The group suggests that the Department consider running MA 116 as a two-semester course. The first semester would be a new course, possibly MA 106 Beginning College Algebra, and would cover only the first half of MA 116. The second

semester would also be a new course, possibly MA 115 College Algebra with Review. The second semester course would cover the second half of MA 116 and review the concepts from MA 105. As one requirement for students to receive a C or better in MA 115, they would need to take and pass the final exam from MA 116. A grade of C or higher in MA 115 would satisfy the University Math Requirement and give the student General Education credit.

- The group suggests that the Department consider whether MA 103/MA 104 is the best option for preparing students to pass MA 116 (and MA 112). While MA 103 and MA 104 cover skills that are needed in MA 116, the group feels there is some information that could be eliminated and other topics that should be added. Making these changes to MA 103/MA 104 would take these courses out of line with the Kansas Board of Regents Core Competencies. Hence, this would need to be a new course, possibly MA 105 Preparation for College Algebra, and most likely it would not transfer to other institutions. The group is not aware of a textbook that covers what we envision for this course. It is possible that the Department would need to create its own text or workbook for this course. This development would take a great deal of time and would possibly require a sabbatical by a faculty member.

Core Education Groups: PO 106 Introduction to US Politics

Meeting members: Steve Cann; Bob Beatty; Linsey Moddelmog; Chris Hamilton

- **Core Meeting One: Identifying road blocks to success**
 - Attendance—getting them in the seats
 - Participation—getting students engaged in the materials
 - Poor testing materials—assignments, tests, papers
 - Critical Thinking---getting students to think more deeply
- **Core Meeting Two: Discussion of best practices**
 - Attendance—
 - Participation—
 - Poor testing materials—
 - Critical Thinking--
- **Core Meeting Three: Discussion of changes**
 - Bob:
 - To promote discussion and liven up class: Introduce new videos on Supreme Court, Interest Groups, Budget etc.
 - Add visit to Brown v. Board museum as part of class on Civil Rights
 - Require students to register and vote in November election—to write a short reflection on the process/experience.
 - Assign students candidates and have them give short presentation on candidates on our ballots
 - Bring in other professors in dep't to give guest lectures on their specialties
 - Steve:
 - Add public policy chpt
 - Use Beatty name plates for discussion
 - To promote discussion and liven up class: Introduce new short videos on Supreme Court, Interest Groups, Budget
 - New paper assignment to interview grandparents on healthcare
 - Chris:
 - Use new test manuals (from other US Govt textbooks)
 - To promote discussion and liven up class: Introduce new short videos on Supreme Court, Interest Groups, Budget
 - Use modified version of Beatty's name plates for attendance and discussion
 - Require students to register and vote in November election—to write a short reflection on the process/experience.
 - Assign students candidates and have them give short presentation on candidates on our ballots
 - Linsey:
 - Use Beatty's name plates for attendance and discussion
 - Work on Interest Group lecture
 - Require students to register and vote in November election—to write a short reflection on the process/experience.

- Assign students candidates and have them give short presentation on candidates on our ballots

PY 151 Course Success Group

Achievement goal orientation (Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Ames and Archer, 1987): the type of goal toward which a person is working has a tremendous impact on how they pursue the goal

4 types of achievement goal orientations

1. **Performance approach orientation:** desire to appear competent, better than peers → effort to outperform, but views mistakes as evidence of incompetence
2. **Performance avoidance orientation:** desire to avoid making mistakes and appearing incompetent, take the known path, the unchallenging tasks, reluctant to show their work to others until it's perfect
3. **Work avoidance orientation:** perform only as much as necessary, as little effort as possible
4. **Mastery orientation:** main interest is in learning the skill/content, willing to take on difficult tasks beyond present capability, views mistakes as learning opportunity, goal is to learn

Key: *orientation is not a characteristic of the person, but a consequence of the situation*; goals influence what a student chooses to study, how strategic they are in their study patterns, how persistent they are in the face of difficulties, and whether or not they are willing and able to go beyond the course requirements.

Our task: reducing the cost of failure and incorporating methods of motivation to connect with students' desires to succeed

1. Question whether the value of the task is truly obvious to students, whether the amount of benefit is equal to or greater than the amount of work, whether the task is focused on critical aspects, whether tasks lead to life-relevant outcomes
2. Explain why *you* are interested in the topic
 - Why do you believe your discipline's ways of thinking are important? How has learning this material enabled you to answer creative and interesting questions as a scholar?
3. Assess students' own expectations for success
 - Depends on past experiences of success, perceived difficulty of the task, persuasiveness of encouragers, initial feedback on success, fit between demands of task and one's skills
4. Define challenging course goals that are just beyond their base capability but well within their reach to succeed and help students think about personal learning goals
 - Including summary of knowledge they are expected to master, expectations for participation, and specific steps for success
 - Including making the connections among the higher level thinking and self-regulation skills that lead to goal attainment.
 - Helps students believe that they possess the skills and competencies to successfully accomplish these learning goals.
 - Helps students see themselves as responsible agents in the definition and accomplishment of personal goals.
5. Make clear your expectations for students' success
 - Let your students know that you believe in their capacity to develop and do well in your course
 - Throughout the course, promote the idea that students will succeed because of their efforts to learn, not because of fixed, innate capacities
6. Make use of students' interest and background knowledge

- Probe for background knowledge at start of course
7. Show the relevance (esp. to students' goals) and value of material
 - Valuable tasks are: intrinsically interesting, novel, curiosity arousing; immediately useful to solve current problems; contribute to long range plans; valued by one's social group; represent a challenge to learner's skills
 - Have students find real world examples to use in class
 - Connect learning in your course to learning in their other courses
 - Underscore how knowledge and skills developed in your course can be transferred to other contexts, including their professional live
 - Ask students to reflect on how what they learn in your course can help them approach aspects of their lives more meaningfully
 - Give students practice using course concepts or disciplinary ways of thinking to solve problems or answer pressing questions
 - Design tests that encourage the kind of learning you want students to achieve: if you base your tests on memorizing details, students will focus on memorizing facts; if your tests stress the synthesis and evaluation of information, students will be motivated to practice those skills when they study.
 8. Teach skills for independent learning
 - By scaffolding, using modeling/prompting/coaching, gradually giving the learner more responsibility
 - Call into play processes for effectively and efficiently encoding, processing, and recalling information
 - Employ meta-cognitive tasks (including self-examination of attitudes and analysis of what makes their classes more or less "motivating," how to control emotions and moods that can facilitate or interfere with learning and motivation)
 9. Motivate students to do the reading
 - Pique their curiosity with a preview of the reading in class
 - Assign the reading at least two sessions before it will be discussed
 - Assign study questions (and use as basis for exam questions)
 - If your class is small, have students turn in brief notes on the day's reading that they can use during exams (e.g., 3" x 5" "survival card" with an outline, definitions, key ideas, or other material from the day's assigned reading)
 - Ask students to write a one-word journal or one-word sentence (choose a single word that best summarizes the reading and then write a page or less explaining or justifying their word choice OR write one complex sentence in answer to a question you pose about the readings and provide three sources/passages from the reading for supporting evidence)
 - Ask nonthreatening questions about the reading (e.g., questions about interest, personal application)
 - Use class time as a reading period if many students have not read (read silently or call on students to read aloud and discuss the key points, making it clear that you are reluctantly taking this unusual step bc they have not completed the assignment)
 - Prepare an exam question on undiscussed readings (Ask if they've done the reading; if not, say "You'll have to read the material on your own. Expect a

- question on the next exam covering the reading.”; the next time you assign reading, reminds the class of what happened the last time)
- Give a written assignment to those students who have not done the reading (At the beginning of class, ask who has completed the reading, then give a written assignment to and dismiss students who have not; those who have stay to participate in class discussion; the written assignment is not graded, merely acknowledged; this technique should not be used more than once a term.)
10. Give helpful, immediate, and frequent feedback
 - By giving feedback on tasks, sending emails and personal memos about students’ performance, and inviting student feedback mid-semester
 11. Respond to initial failure with interest and support vs. criticism and withdrawal
 - Frame wrong answers as misunderstandings vs. as failures (“They gave the right answer, just to a different question”) → take errors as teachable moments
 12. Follow mistakes with additional opportunities to learn without severe penalties vs. only demerits
 - Acknowledge own mistakes and model how someone should approach correcting that mistake
 13. Offer credit/recognition for making progress, not just reaching a preset criterion, to help students become reflective about their learning to see how far they’ve come vs. how they compare with others
 - Shift grading away from norm referenced comparisons to criterion referenced individual achievement
 - Shift to portfolio type grading vs. tests as the basis for grades
 14. Reward the development of a learning community in the class where everyone is expected to make progress and encouraged to help everyone else make progress
 - Pass out a list of research topics chosen by students so they will know whether others are writing papers of interest to them.
 - Make available copies of the best papers and essay exams.
 - Provide class time for students to read papers or assignments submitted by classmates.
 - Have students write a brief critique of a classmate's paper.
 - Schedule a brief talk by a student who has experience or who is doing a research paper on a topic relevant to your lecture.
 15. Incorporate a variety of teaching methods
 - Role playing, debates, brainstorming, discussion, demonstrations, case studies, audiovisual presentations, guest speakers, or small group work
 16. Recognize that our classes are not the only or even the most important venue in which our students function

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Stats and Research Methods Course Success Group Session 2

For this meeting, we identified potential solutions based on the resources provided by Margaret Wood/CTEL. Each of us was responsible to explore the resources pertaining to particular areas, as follows:

Jericho Hockett: Student Motivation

Students need to value the information they're being taught, to believe they can succeed, and to receive helpful and frequent feedback. As instructors we need to make information relevant, applicable, and tied to their majors.

For those who are working on a terminal BA (no grad school aspirations) we need to emphasize that we are teaching them to be consumers of information

Use real word examples at the beginning of every class

Increase motivation by rewarding the process, not just the final result.

Concept testing

Clear, straight forward multiple choice question

Student has to get question right and explain why it is correct

Mike Russell: General Best Practices/Psychology Specific Teaching Resources

Bloom's 6 levels of cognitive domain: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

To truly engage in critical thinking students need to practice the last three strategies

Encourage students through low stakes assignments and real world application early and often
5-step model described in the Duron, Limbach, and Waugh (2006) article.

Determine learning objectives

Teach through questioning

Practice before you assess

Review, refine, improve

Provide frequent feedback

Constructive comments about all aspects of course performance

tardiness, absences, interest, performance

Remediation options

Linzi Gibson: Study Skills, Learning Mindset and Math Phobia

Group work

Score team members

Reassess groups early to mid semester

Quizzing individually and in groups

Support Materials

Video examples

Tutor support

Critical Thinking

Get students to see value of reading

Reading prompts (one per reading assignment)

(Connect past experience to text)

Identification of problem or issue
Making connections (What do I already know about this concept?)
Interpretation of evidence
Challenging assumptions (what assumptions does the author make and do I agree?)
Making application (What advice can I add to this reading sections? What advice could I give someone with this information?)
Taking a different point of view
D2L discussion board, pre-reading assignment, peer evaluation, student pairs

Metacognitive strategies

Muddiest point

Allowing students to be confused

Post assessment to help students realize conceptual change

Reflection after exam

Low stakes assignment

What about my exam preparation worked well that I should remember to do next time?

What did not work so well? What should I change?

Metacognitive teaching

What assumptions am I making about my students?

What do I make the instructional decisions that I make?

What do I know about teaching? What would I like to learn?

What am I confused about?

Stats and Research Methods Course Success Group Session 3

For this meeting, we devised a plan to improve success, including long-term/programmatic and shorter-term/individual strategies. We will evaluate whether our findings lead to improved success by comparing DFW rates and course grades from Fall 2015 PY151 and PY251 sections to those in previous semesters, as well as through pre-PY151 and post-PY251 test data we collect as a department. We will disseminate our findings to faculty in our department via professional development-focused faculty meetings.

Dr. Mike Russell

1. I am going to covertly design the course around Bloom's 6 levels of cognitive domain with a greater emphasis on the last 3 domains (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). When I think about how I have structured the course previously and where the vast majority of the grades reside, I have a strong tendency to focus on the first 3 domains of knowledge, comprehension, and application (least of the 3 here). Though I will continue to include (for obvious reasons) the first 3 domains, I am going to spend the summer thinking of ways of including the last 3 domains in lectures (including discussions), assignments, and exams. It is just not enough for students to know how to perform calculations and when to use various tests. They also need to start thinking about how the parts relate to the whole (analysis), thinking about the bigger picture (synthesis), and making more in-depth judgments about the information (evaluation).
2. My second goal for this next class will be for me to incorporate the 5-step model described in the Duron, Limbach, and Waugh (2006) article (attached). The figure I

distributed at our meeting is on the second page of the attachment (page 161). In particular, my focus will be on steps 4 and 5 and possibly step 3 by providing additional options when performance has been found to be insufficient (less than a C). I am going to ensure that students receive frequent feedback as well as constructive comments (not criticism) about all aspects of course performance (tardiness, absences, seeming interest in the course, performance on assignments and exams, change in performance (they are showing improvement or deterioration)). I am hoping that comments about improvement will encourage students to keep performing at a high level and that comments about deterioration or poor performance (combined with additional options for remediation) will prevent an additional sliding in the course grade and to avoid the possibility of a student giving up (which would then translate into better grades and a decrease in the D, F, W rate for the class)

Dr. Jericho Hockett

- Start my semester by explaining why I am personally interested in the topic, as well as by sharing some of the goals past PY251 students have set and achieved in relation to the course
- Better connect learning in this class to learning in their other classes (e.g., by having students select and read articles relevant to other psych classes)
- Find and post on D2L--and have students find and share--relevant videos, articles, and other forms of media, and use these in assignments
- Better integrate technology (I'll be in a new tech/activity classroom)
- Use low-stakes quizzes to build necessary fact-based knowledge needed for the application-based critical skills they should gain from class, and revise exams to extend application-based activities
- Assess their motivation for learning early in the semester and at other points throughout the semester
- Preview class readings and assign reading questions that build in complexity over the semester (e.g., early questions will be fact gathering, later questions will be synthesizing)
- Assign students to teams that they will stay in for the whole semester, and in which they will collaborate on low stakes quizzes/assignments (after doing solo prep work), and incorporate more team-based feedback
- Not just encourage, but actually guide students in meta-cognition (e.g., free-writing on emotions immediately before exams, reflecting on strategies after)

With essentially an overhaul of the way I'm teaching this class, I won't be able to easily pinpoint the effectiveness of any one specific change; however, I can assess general effectiveness by comparing scores on student outcomes and teaching evaluations across semesters.

Dr. Linzi Gibson

In upcoming semesters of PY151 I plan to implement several changes based on the discussions we have had during course success group meetings as well as my own personal research.

1. I plan to develop a video library of statistical "problem sets." For each chapter there will be corresponding videos demonstrating myself completing statistical word problems from beginning to end, while providing the students information about the logic behind the calculations.

2. I plan to develop learning teams at the beginning of the semester based on pre-test data, attempting to form groups with a mix of abilities. I would like to utilize these groups to promote active learning through small group work completing authentic projects. Students will collect simple data sets as a group and perform analyses of these data together. They will then submit their final APA style lab reports individually. Each individual will receive two grades, one for their individual effort as well as a group grade.
3. I would also like to make a greater effort to employ metacognitive strategies in and outside of the classroom. I find students report that the lectures “made sense” to them as they listened and took notes in class. When the students go home and read through their notes, they at times describe confusion over the material. While I hope the video library will help to reduce this problem, I will also employ discussion boards. These discussions will allow the students a forum outside of class to clarify material. They will be required to post about the clearest point and the muddiest point for each chapter. I will reply to all student discussion posts, but will also encourage students to reply to each other’s posts as well. I would also like to encourage this sort of reflection after each exam. I always go over each exam in class. After this review I will allow students 5-10 minutes to reflect on their performance, with emphasis on what study strategies worked for them and what they may change when studying for future exams.
4. I will continue to provide low stakes quizzing to my students. I began using quizzes along with my normal exams for the past two semesters with great success. The students have reported that they like the quizzes and I have seen improvements in their performance as well. At this point the quizzing is an optional component of the course, but I may change that in future semesters as it seems to contribute to the student’s success in the course.