Discussion Board Labs: Innovative Strategy to Increase FYE Student Engagement Through Active Faculty Reflection

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SESSION OBJECTIVE

• In this education session, attendees will:
  • gain knowledge on engagement strategies in the discussion board.
  • be able to describe and apply the active faculty reflection process on other classroom components.
    • Implementing these strategies will increase student engagement, boost student confidence, improve assignment quality and support student success.
FYE STUDENT DISCUSSION BOARD BEHAVIOR

- **The invisible student** – non-contributor
- **The copycat student** – plagiarizer
- **The purposeless student** – off-topic writer
- **The nickel-and-dime student** – shallow writer

- Low student engagement as a result of writing fears
- Bandura’s Self-efficacy Theory
  - Lack of confidence causes fear and constraint
  - If a student believes he can’t, then he won’t
  - If a student believes he can, then he will
LOW STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

- Students feel disconnected
- Decreased likelihood of student achievement
- Decreased likelihood of course completion
- Increased likelihood to withdraw from the institution
HOW CAN FACULTY GET AHEAD OF THE CURVE?

• Use discussion board threads to assess students’ needs
• Adapt pedagogical methods that meet student needs
  – increases engagement
  – Increases academic progress
FYE FACULTY NEED

• Align FYE Student Needs & Institutional Faculty Engagement Expectations
  – Increased faculty classroom engagement → increased student engagement
  – Faculty must have the flexibility to think outside the box and be empowered to innovate where needed
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

• Shifted course facilitation philosophy from quantitative engagement expectations to the adaption of the following Instructional Tenets that empowered faculty to innovate within their courses.
ACTIVE FACULTY REFLECTION

- Reviewed student feedback (end of course surveys) & performance (course outcomes).
- Applying all five tenets, the FYE faculty member created **Discussion Board Labs** to provide:
  - opportunity to teach how to prepare student discussion board responses *(Facilitate Learning)*
  - live labs are offered as live sessions to provide immediate assistance and feedback to students *(Instructional Agility/Connect with students)*
  - sessions that are by design increase faculty presence in the class and the labs are new facilitation strategies implemented *(Innovate/Be Present)*
DISCUSSION BOARD LABS

- Three, 30-minute, live virtual labs with FYE students
- Provides a walkthrough of how to read, review and create responses to discussion board questions.
- Offered during the first week of the students’ course
- Hosted by the student’s instructor to track student improvement over the course.
- Faculty use modeling good discussion posts to teach material
- Grading rubrics introduced as student resources

Lab 1: How to write a good main post

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<th>From Assignment Rubric</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Quality of Main Post</td>
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| The images shown are shared in the session to illustrate how to write good peer responses based on the tips provided.

Helpful tips:
- Integrate the week’s topic
- Bring in the lesson material
- Build on the conversation by
  -Posing a question
  -Offering a suggestion or giving advice

Lab 2: How to infuse course content into posts

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Helpful tips:
- Mention something from the lesson
- Mention where you got the information
- Elaborate on the information
- Ensure that the information is accurate

Lab 3: How to write a good peer response

The images shown are shared in the session to illustrate how to incorporate learning resources in the response based on the tips provided.

Helpful tips:
- Break down the question in parts/questions
- Include a key word(s) from each part/question in the main post
- Give the details (additional insight, information, explanation)

What inspired you to pursue your degree?

Talk about your support system and how you use it.

What did you like about the topic covered this week?

Talk about your support system and how you use it.

Optional/Free response: Anything else you’d like to share about the week.

Tip 1: Integrate your responses to the main post and the peer responses.

Tip 2: Add your own thoughts and ideas.

Tip 3: Give the answer.

Tip 4: Add your feedback.

Tip 5: Give the details.

Tip 6: Add your support system and how you use it.

Tip 7: Give the information.

Tip 8: Elaborate on the information.

Tip 9: Offer a suggestion or giving advice.

Tip 10: Break down the question in parts/questions.

Tip 11: Include a key word(s) from each part/question in the main post.

Tip 12: Give the details (additional insight, information, explanation).
COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

• Apply the active faculty reflection process to a common classroom challenge (i.e. low live session attendance):

1. What do you see in the classroom? What indicators point to the challenge? (Be Present)
2. What intervention should occur? (Innovate)
3. When will the intervention be introduced? (Facilitate Learning, Instructional Agility, Connect with Students)
4. How (methodology)? (Facilitate Learning, Instructional Agility, Connect with Students)
5. What measurement outcomes will determine the impact of the strategy?
6. What is the reflective process? (Innovate)
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