ENGAGING THE ONLINE LEARNER: ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS TO CREATE COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Rita-Marie Conrad, Ph.D.  
ritamarie.conrad@duke.edu

J. Ana Donaldson, Ed.D.  
ana.donaldson@cfu.net
Overview

• Completed - Pre-recorded session
• Today - Synchronous interactive session
• Session outcomes
  – Apply the concept of engaged learning
  – Implement a five-phase model for online student engagement
  – Develop or identify new activities to engage your own students in each phase of the model
Preparation for this session...

- Reflect on the questions asked previously
- Be prepared to share your own experiences and successful activities with the group
- Bring a brief statement to the next session with your definition of engagement
- Identify one of your courses and have materials available to work on in this session using the Phases of Engagement approach
• We asked you to think of an object that represents you or your life at this point in time.
• Please go to chat room (assigned by your first initial of your name) and share what you picked and how this relates to how you teach, design instruction or learn?
WHY DO YOU DESIGN/ TEACH THE WAY YOU DO?

SURVEY:

- Teach /Design the way you learn?
- Teach/Design within constraints?
  - Time
  - Classroom set-up
  - Departmental policies
- Teach the way you were taught?
- Design within a set design model?
- Other?
The Phases of Engagement


(Conrad & Donaldson, 2012)

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Activity Characteristics

- Has a relevant purpose
- Clear directions and assessment criteria
- Opportunity for creativity by learner
- Multiple paths to the same objective
- Incorporates personal reflection
- An idea exchange occurs
Phases of Engagement

1. Connect
2. Communicate
3. Collaborate
4. Co-Facilitate
5. Continue
Phase 1 - Connect

- **Learner - Newcomer**
- **Instructor – Social Negotiator**
  - Social and orientation-like activities
  - Establish online presence
- **Examples**
  - Icebreakers – Social and Cognitive
  - Discussions on community issues such as Netiquette

SET THE TONE
Phase 2 - Communicate

- Learner – Dyad Partner (2 student pairing)
- Instructor - Structural Engineer
  - Forms dyads or very small groups of learners
- Activities require:
  - Critical thinking
  - Reflection
  - Sharing of ideas
- Examples:
  - Peer reviews, Problem solving, Case studies

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Phase 3 - Collaborate

• Learner – Team Member (3-5 member groups)
• Instructor - Facilitator
• Activities require small groups to:
  – Collaborate
  – Problem solve
  – Reflect upon experiences
• Examples:
  – Content discussions, Role plays

PROMOTE SELF-RELIANCE

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Phase 4 – Co-Facilitate

- Learner - Initiator of Activity/Partner
- Instructor - Community Member/Challenger
- Activities
  - Learner-designed, Learner-led
- Examples:
  - Group presentations
  - Group projects
  - Learner-facilitated discussions
Phase 5 – Continue

- Learner - Contemplator
- Instructor - Supporter
- Activities
  - Reflective (and applied)
- Examples:
  - Self-reflections
  - Evaluation of course engagement
  - Plans for future engagement

SELF-ENGAGED LEARNER

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What is your approach to engagement?
What activities are you currently using?

Think about what activities you are using in your courses. How do they fit into the Phases of Engagement model?
Course you are going to be working with today....

SURVEY:
- Course currently online or blended
- Moving from face-to-face to online or blended
- First time designing an online/blended course
- Other comments?
Phase 1 - Connect

1. Is the activity fun and nonthreatening?
2. Is it person-focused (a social icebreaker)?
3. Is it content-focused (a cognitive icebreaker)?
4. Does it require learners to read one another’s entries and respond to one another?
5. Does it require the learner to find something in common with at least 10 percent of the learning community?
6. Does it require a person to be imaginative or express genuine emotions or openness?

SET THE TONE

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Phase 2 - Communicate

1. Is the activity academically oriented?
2. Is it content-focused?
3. Does it require learners to read one another’s entries?
4. Does it require that peers express what they agreed with or liked about each other’s work?
5. Does it require that peers indicate how others’ work could be improved?
6. Have guidelines or a rubric been provided stating how learners should provide feedback to one another?

BUILD CONFIDENCE

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Phase 3 - Collaborate

1. Does the activity consist of more than just questions and answers?
2. Is it content-focused?
3. Is the activity authentic? Does the activity have value beyond the learning setting?
4. Does it require learners to work collaboratively and use their experiences as a starting point?
5. Does it require team members to demonstrate critical thinking?
6. Is the team required to produce a synthesized response or end product?
7. Does the activity build skills that can be used beyond the length of the course?
8. Are team members held individually accountable for their contributions to the activity?

PROMOTE SELF-RELIANCE
Phase 4 – Co-Facilitate

1. Are the objectives for the activity clearly stated in the syllabus?
2. Is there a rubric for the grading of the activity?
3. Is the concept of a co-facilitated activity introduced at least two weeks before learners begin planning it?
4. Are learners provided several weeks to plan the activity?
5. Does the topic allow a person or team to be creative in their choice and implementation of the activity?
6. Does the participation grade include participation in the co-facilitated activities?
Phase 5 – Continue

1. Does the activity ask for a synthesis of the learning experience?
2. Does it require the learner to share his or her experiences?
3. Does it allow for honest and open responses?
4. Does it require a person to draw a conclusion regarding how he or she has changed over the course of the learning experience?
5. Is the activity insightful and nonthreatening?
# Student Engagement Plan *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week or Unit</th>
<th>Topic or Learning Objective</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Media Tool Selected</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction of subject</td>
<td>Icebreaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Non-graded feedback</td>
<td>Discussion area of LMS</td>
<td>Course access; Familiarity with LMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Determine objectives for a unit of instruction</td>
<td>Peer partner discussion and critique of individually developed unit objectives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion rubric</td>
<td>Email Blog Wiki</td>
<td>textbook received</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* adapted from Boettcher and Conrad, *Faculty Guide to Moving Teaching and Learning to the Web*, 2nd ed. 2004
Link to an authentic example of a course designed using the Phases of Engagement model

Sample
Now What?

• We asked you to identify activities for your chosen course for each phase
• Please share your reaction to the choices and how this supports your learning objectives and encourages student engagement.
How do you measure quality and engagement in your classes?

SURVEY:
- Using rubrics to measure performance?
- Aligning assessments with instructional objectives?
- Using performance evaluations or high-stakes testing?
- Other?
Final questions or thoughts ...

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