LaGuardia College is a national leader in providing solutions to the ever-present need to help incoming college students with developmental reading, writing, and math skills. Recently, we hosted Pedagogy Matters! The First National JAM on Teaching Developmental Education. This was an outgrowth of a 28-month project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation called Global Skills for College Completion (GSCC) as part of its post-secondary education investment in doubling the number of young adults in the U.S. with a postsecondary credential by 2020. The project goal is to improve the historically low pass rates of basic skills students in U.S. colleges, which is a serious impediment to increasing college completion rates.

Since accepting its first incoming class in 1971, LaGuardia Community College has been a gateway to college for thousands of students who might not otherwise have had access to higher education. As one of 17 undergraduate colleges of the City University of New York (CUNY), LaGuardia serves over 17,000 degree students and 55,000 students in non-credit and outreach programs. The 2010 Census identified the Borough of Queens as the most diverse county in the nation. In addition to having large Black, Hispanic and Asian populations, more than 500,000 immigrants entered the borough during the past ten years. As part of this community, LaGuardia Community College reflects these demographics. Over eighty percent of LaGuardia's full-time students are members of racial/ethnic minorities, 60% are first-generation college students, and over sixty percent of the student population are women. Approximately one-half of the student body receives some form of financial aid. Nearly one-quarter of all entering students require ESL instruction and over ninety percent of students require some form of basic skills remediation. Among our degree students almost half have been in the U.S. under five years. They represent over 160 countries and speaking over 115 different languages. Located in a federally-designated poverty area, Long Island City has a per capita family income

and educational attainment level that are among the lowest in the entire city. Two-thirds of entering students report a family income of $25,000 or less (MetLife, 2005/IR Profile [adapted]).

There are 1,200,000 students in the New York City Public school system. Several of the comprehensive high schools in the city have 5,000 students attending. If you add faculty, administration and staff you would have the equivalent of a small Midwestern town in one square block. Typical caseloads for the counseling staff range from 300 to 500 students. Further, we pay $56,000 per year for a typical inmate in the New York penal system; whereas for a typical New York City student we spend a whopping $16,000 per year, as our Mayor has just stated (5/5) he will lay off 4,720 teachers next year. In short, between being a largely immigrant population of non-native English speakers, getting little to no support or guidance from high school counselors, and sitting in overcrowded classrooms with a shortage of qualified teachers, the statistics for a New York City high school student successfully transitioning to college are daunting. Yet, we here at the community college, with a nationwide first-year dropout rate of 37%, only see these shortcomings as further evidence that these students need our guidance more than ever to come away with 21st century skills and a reasonable chance of gainful employment in the future job market.

LaGuardia College is particularly well known for several of its signature pedagogies (Shulman, 2005) used to work with students lacking key developmental skills—from the oldest, almost forty years now, using learning communities to pair developmental skills classes with more advanced academic courses—to the newest, electronic portfolios, which began nine years ago and are now used by 12,000 LaGuardia students. In addition, Bret Eynon, our Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning has recently founded LaGuardia's new, FIPSE-funded initiative: the Making Connections National Resource Center on Inquiry, Reflection, and

Integrative Education, a collaboration with 30-NYC institutions of higher learning and a nationwide outreach to other colleges and universities.

The LaGuardia faculty teaching load is twenty-seven hours per year. Committee work and several refereed articles or a book are necessary for promotion, and eventually, for tenure. The pay is approximately two-thirds of the salary of a professor at a four-year public institution. The average class size for an introductory course such as Cultural Anthropology is a manageable 36-38 students. As you might imagine from the above statistics, most of my students arrive needing serious work with their developmental skills. This includes beginning my class by going over the concept of how to read a syllabus, how to improve note-taking skills, and how to employ self-questioning techniques. I use the first two or three classes to give them hands-on exercises on functional literacy skills: how to read a social science chapter in a book or an article, how to write brief summaries of their readings. They must submit or re-submit their summaries to me until they get them right. The concept of rewriting and revising is largely foreign to them.

In light of the fact that the typical incoming student is working full-time and in need of remediation I ask: "how can we develop and challenge novice learners to adopt and adapt their learning styles to distinguish between formal and informal knowledge, or between academic and experiential anthropological knowledge using a combination of new media technology and inquiry-based research." My term-length inquiry-based assignment requires the students to research an endangered language in such a way that they also learn something about that people's economic and kinship system, their culture and folklore, and to outline the prospects of that language or people's survival. One of the seven required skills all LaGuardia students have to show proficiency in is the development of information literacy skills. This assignment helps to fulfill that requirement. The research paper is scaffolded so that each part of the assignment

roughly correlates to the chapter we are reading in the textbook. We begin by touring the library, including a presentation on the subscription and electronic databases available to students for research. As many students do not have access to their own computers, I also schedule at least three sessions in a lab: one, to go over the electronic databases again; the second, to give them time to work on their first draft; and third, to cover the APA stylesheet, paraphrasing and footnotes. Then, to know whether students are learning what I teach, I ask them to write several reflective pieces which are posted in BlackBoard both for self and public assessment.

The learning objectives for the course focus "less on searching and finding and more on analyzing, understanding and applying evidence to address authentic problems rooted in the discipline" (Bass & Eynon, 7). For example, instead of a pop quiz on Chapter 5, Language and Communication, I might ask them to do what I call a "One-Minute Exercise:"

> Please take a few minutes to reflect on what you have read in ***Where to Learn as We Do, a Machine Teaches Itself.*** What are your thoughts about speaking to computers or, having computers speak to us? How would a computer react to facial or hand gestures? Finally, how does this article relate to what we have recently read about language and communication in the text?

The concern here is to differentiate between relating the textbook content to real world experiences versus relating the students' own experiences to the textbook. "What difficulties did they have with language when they first came to New York?" "What problems do they still have with language and communication?" "Do they frequently have to miss class to act as translators for their parents or siblings?"

This method of bringing them into the course material is a way of getting them invested in Cultural Anthropology. If they see the relation between what they are doing in class and what their day-to-day life experiences are (or were, in their home country), they will more readily take

on more challenging material. I have to keep in mind that this may be the only Anthropology class they ever take in their lives. I ask myself "What do I want to leave them with at the end of the semester?" Another example: In small group work I regularly use peer support to promote higher order thinking. When you bring this many nationalities and backgrounds together for group problem-solving exercises their discussions become so animated there are many times I become completely superfluous as they come up with solutions I never anticipated.

Developing their "online communication skills makes the immediate processes of learning more visible and provide opportunities for students to develop personal and academic voices" (Bass & Eynon, 8) In addition to developing a sense of audience they come to realize that they are now publicly accountable for their work. Bass & Eynon talk about invisible learning, or those intermediate steps in the learning process. Students don't just morph from novices to experts in our discipline, yet we are continually focused on the final exam or the well written final research paper. The intermediary processes of scaffolding help students develop the skills to think and act like social scientists as they progress through the stages. We know that experts see patterns more quickly than novices and are better able to organize seemingly disparate bits of information into meaningful chunks. Experts are not only more knowledgeable but are better at retrieving information particular to a given task. What level of expertise can I hope for in 12 weeks?

An expert teacher will anticipate the problems students may encounter before the assignment is given and may provide contextual information that will help the student more readily grasp the concept. So just as we are able to adapt our expert knowledge to suit the situation—Am I preparing to teach a class or to write a scholarly article?—so too can we show students how they can immediately apply what they have learned in different contexts: What

expertise do they need to apply to complete my research paper vs. what expertise do they need to have to answer a pop quiz or an exam? As disciplinary experts we also know what we don't know—we use the joint tools of metacognition and reflection to help measure ourselves and to gauge where *we* need to do more work, so as we begin to develop the continuum for students we instinctively make a place for, say, the accomplished novice—someone who is not yet an expert but is more than a beginner.

Now that we are armed with Web 2.0 technology we are seeing that students are applying knowledge in novel ways, giving rise to the idea of adaptive learning, or better, adaptive expertise. According to Bass & Eynon new media environments can make visible the *intermediate thinking processes* intrinsic to the development of expert-like abilities and dispositions in novice learners, and nurture abilities associated with adaptive expertise that allow learners to make flexible use of knowledge in self-regulated ways" (11). An example might be the scaffolding process for my inquiry-based research exercise that incorporates elements of BlackBoard, YouTube, FaceBook, and diigo throughout.

When we are assessing students how do we know they learned what we taught? I am not suggesting that all of my students will become experts in one semester. But using pedagogies such as metacognitive and reflective exercises posted asynchronously, or using digital stories instead of powerpoints, or using diigo for annotating and sharing resources we are introducing students to the structures of disciplinary thinking in authentic ways. We quickly see whether student A has acquired factual or surface knowledge or whether that student knows when or how to apply the concepts in a new situation, which requires a deep structural knowledge. This argues for a revision of assessment tools to better judge these intermediate or invisible steps rather than relying solely on a two quizzes, midterm, a final, and a research paper. I'd rather the

students have an engaging fieldwork experience with all the attendant transcriptions and analysis dropped into five-minute digital stories that they are invested in rather than to read thirty-two papers on the economic and kinship systems of some country they'll never think about again.

Finally, allowing students time to explore their ideas, whether in small group discussions or on BlackBoard, or devoting class time to exploring electronic databases may seem like wasted time. After all, I have so much content to cover! But, in the same breath I would say that the accidents of discovery, what one researcher calls serendipity, that leads students to make decisions about the appropriateness of a source or the direction that their research eventually takes leads directly into the development of their disciplinary skills. Thus giving more weight to research and IL skills over the privileged final paper, or to make the weight of reflective exercises equal that of a quiz or a test may be the best way we can help those students progress down that continuum towards expertise.

Works Cited

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