DASH to Success in a Learning Community

Summer Literacy Institute 2015
San Jacinto College
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Pilot Project - Spring 2016

* Learning Communities at San Jacinto College: a group of students enrolled in 2 or more linked courses

* Integrated Reading & Writing (College Prep) + U.S. History 1302* (Academic) = DASH

* (Dash to Academic Success in History)
Benefits to Students in Learning Communities

* enhanced academic performance
* acceleration through College Prep while earning academic credit
* integration of academic and social experiences
* positive perceptions of the college environment and experience
* personal gains (i.e. intellectual and social development)

¹Zhao and Kuh
Key Elements of Learning Communities: Curricular Integration\textsuperscript{2}

* aligned syllabi
* overarching theme
* joint assignments
* joint grading
* cross-course, project-based learning

\textsuperscript{2}Visher et al
Aligning Syllabi

* Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
* General Education Outcomes (GEOs)
* textbooks
* course sites on Blackboard
Integrated Reading and Writing SLOs:

A. Locate explicit textual information, draw complex inferences, and describe, analyze, and evaluate the information within and across multiple texts of varying lengths.

B. Comprehend and use vocabulary effectively in oral communication, reading, and writing.

C. Identify and analyze the audience, purpose, and message across a variety of texts.

D. Describe and apply insights gained from reading and writing a variety of texts.

E. Compose a variety of texts that demonstrate reading comprehension, clear focus, logical development of ideas, and use of appropriate language that advance the writer’s purpose.
Integrated Reading & Writing SLOs:

F. Determine and use effective approaches and rhetorical strategies for given reading and writing situations.

G. Generate ideas and gather information relevant to the topic and purpose, incorporating the ideas and words of other writers in student writing using established strategies.

H. Evaluate relevance and quality of ideas and information in recognizing, formulating, and developing a claim.

I. Develop and use effective reading and revision strategies to strengthen the writer’s ability to compose college-level writing assignments.

J. Recognize and apply the conventions of Standard English in reading and writing.
U.S. History 1301 and 1302 SLOs:

1. Create an argument through the use of historical evidence.

2. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.

3. Analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on this period of United States history.
Aligning Learning Objectives

U. S. History 1301 and 1302 SLOs:
1. Create and argument through the use of historical evidence.
   * INRW SLOs: B, D, E, G, H & J
2. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.
3. Analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural and global forces on this period of U.S. History.
   * INRW SLOs: C, G, H, J
Discipline Skills Overlap

Reading critically:
- analyzing graphic and written sources
- identifying author bias
- making inferences
- identifying elements of an argument

Writing effectively:
- determining purpose, audience, and organizational pattern
- developing a thesis
- using sources to support an argument
Discipline Skills Overlap

Using the Internet appropriately:
- evaluating and citing sources
- understanding its role in history

Making connections:
- personal
- social & intercultural
- political & international
Overarching Themes

* Narrative:
  • Journalism: primary/secondary accounts of events
  • biographies

* Comparison-contrast:
  • past and current events/situations

* Cause-effect
  • Civil War, World Wars I and II
  • Passage of laws

* Argument
  • Civil rights
Joint Assignments

Learning Activities\(^3\) should promote:

* establishment of learning goals rather than performance goals
* individual responsibility and personal development
* collaborative construction and sharing of knowledge through oral and written discourse
* synthesis of information and diverse viewpoints

\(^3\)Bielaczyc and Collins
Cross-course, Project-based Learning

* student essays
* discussion boards
* portfolio
* service learning
* The Common Assignment (History)
The Common Assignment: History 1302

Analyzing an Historical Debate

For this assignment, you will analyze an historical issue from the second half of U.S. History (post-1877). You will need to compare at least two opposing perspectives on that issue. *

* Entire assignment included in hand-out.
From the Student’s Perspective

Reading Comprehension and Student Writing Samples
Reflective Practice

Data

* pre-instruction questionnaire

* General Education Outcomes Assessment
  • SACS Accreditation
  • Yearly college self-evaluation
  • LEAP Rubrics\(^4\)

* faculty collaboration

\(^4\)Association of American Colleges and Universities
**Excerpted from LEAP Rubric: Critical Thinking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Successful (Level 2)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful (Level 1 or 0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation of issues</strong></td>
<td>Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.</td>
<td>Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation or evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. // Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.</td>
<td>Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation or evaluation. // Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influence of context and assumptions</strong></td>
<td>Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).</td>
<td>Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student's position</strong></td>
<td>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.</td>
<td>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusions and related outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.</td>
<td>Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Successful (Level 2)</td>
<td>Unsuccessful (Level 1 or 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context of and Purpose for Writing</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s)</td>
<td>Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</td>
<td>(e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).</td>
<td>(e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources and Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation</td>
<td>Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources and Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.</td>
<td>Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control of Syntax and Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.</td>
<td>Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions/Answers
Contact Us

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Thank you for your participation.

Footnotes

1. Zhao and Kuh
2. Visher et al
3. Bielaczyc and Collins
4. Association of American Colleges and Universities