

Promising Practices in Developmental Education

Michael C. McConnell, Editor

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“I believe it is essential that students are taught how to become more strategic and self-regulated learners.”

—Claire Ellen Weinstein

We dedicate this monograph to our beloved Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein. May your legacy of helping others turn dreams into realities shine on!

A Word from the Directors

On behalf of the Texas Success Initiative Professional Development (TSI PD) Program, welcome to the Texas DEPCO monograph. This publication is devoted to the dissemination of promising practices and is dedicated to the faculty, staff, and administrators in the field of developmental education. The TSI PD grant was funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the purpose of providing Texas developmental education (DE) professionals with access to high-quality professional development that is research-based and addresses state and regional needs. One of the online avenues used to share and disseminate promising practices to the field was through the Texas Developmental Education Professional Community Online (TX DEPCO) blog. This monograph is a product and extension of that online publication series. We would like to express our gratitude to the contributors. Finally, we would like to thank the TSI PD Program and Texas State University Graduate Program in Developmental Education faculty, staff, and doctoral assistants for their work in the completion of this publication. We appreciate your work in the field of DE and your support of the goals of the TSI PD Program.

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The Impact of Mandated Developmental Education Reforms on Administrative Processes

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Developmental education programs across the country are continually charged with finding new ways to move students through developmental courses and into college-level courses as quickly and efficiently as possible. No one path to college completion exists, nor is one type of academic support sufficient for every student. “Varied systems must be in place that provide different levels of support and are embedded into the overall fabric of all institutions” (Casazza & Silverman, 2013, p. 4). Governing bodies recognize the need for improving the success of developmental students, so laws are passed, mandates are handed down, and in some cases, institutions impose goals on developmental educators that require implementation of reform mandates that may or may not be a good fit for their department and/or institution. These mandates prove to be quite a challenge for administrators of developmental programs because we are told what type of program to implement, are given a timeline on when to implement the new program, and in some instances, are directed how to implement the program. Traditionally, there is a cost associated with implementing a new mandate; however, in many cases, funding is not given to do so. With no additional funding provided, it becomes a balancing act by administrators to figure out a way to offer new programs and have faculty perform additional duties.

In many instances, insufficient time is given to developmental programs to evaluate one reform before being asked to implement an

additional or replacement reform. At any one time, a developmental education department may be implementing more than one reform mandate, making it difficult to determine if a reform is working and students are successful. Ever-changing reform mandates also make it difficult for the administrators of developmental programs to create a consistent set of policies for faculty and students to follow. Nothing moves quickly in an institution, and there are processes and policies that need to be followed that are out of the control of the department, so when given mandates, administrators must make changes. Determining the best course of action is complicated at best. While the main focus for faculty is on processes and procedures for the reform mandate, there are also a multitude of administrative aspects that must be addressed. These can include the following:

- *Course Development:* Understanding the mandate and what is required as well as designing the curriculum and policies to be implemented.
- *Faculty:* Determining faculty requirements in terms of numbers needed, workload, pay, professional development, and buy-in.
- *Structure:* Working with others within the institution to set up and implement policy regarding the reform; departments can include human resource, budget and payroll offices, registrar's office, advising, and academic departments.
- *Evaluation:* Evaluating the reform mandate that may or may not involve the institutional research department.

Course Development

The first aspect of creating and implementing a new reform mandate is understanding what the mandate actually states. If the mandate is a piece of legislation, it can truly take a bit of time to read, digest, and understand what is being required. This first aspect involves discussing the legislation with colleagues at your institution and around the state, as well as with the state's higher education governing body. This first aspect also involves asking a lot of questions regarding the implementation of the mandate. Once this is settled, the mandate needs to be interpreted for your institution. Each institution is unique with its own student population and

demographics, faculty population, institutional policies, culture and diversities. Understanding how these factors impact the implementation of the reform mandate is critical to the mandate being successful. Note, that implementation at one institution is not likely to match implementation at another institution, as it should not because what works at one school will not necessarily work at another school due to the differences in the schools.

As the reform mandate is being interpreted for your institution, discussions need to take place on the curricular aspects of the mandate. Determining learning outcomes for the mandate and curricular content is the first step. Collaboration of faculty is critical at this juncture because the reform is a mandate, not an option. Faculty need to discuss the mandate and generate ideas on how to implement the mandate at their institution. Together, faculty can start developing curriculum, structure, and policies around the mandate.

Faculty

Faculty members matter. The impact that a faculty member can have on the student experience can be seen in and out of the classroom. “Faculty behaviors and attitudes affect students profoundly, which suggests that faculty members may play the single-most important role in student learning” (Umback & Wawrzynski, 2005, p. 176). Faculty buy-in is essential to the success of the program and, therefore, should be included in the development of the curriculum, structure, and policies. Support will be received more quickly if faculty have a hand in how the department responds to the mandate.

Professional development needs to be provided to ensure that all faculty, including part-time faculty, are aware of the reform mandate and what it entails. “Professional development is the conscience of the professional academic. It makes teachers aware of what they do, asks them why, and challenges them to continually do better” (Altany, 2012, p. 5). There are multiple areas of training that need to be included. First must be training on the reform mandate and how the department has chosen to implement it. Secondly, training on pedagogy for the program is a must; for example, if coaching and mentoring are going to play a large role in the program, faculty should be given an opportunity to attend training on this.

Your institution's faculty development program is a great resource for this type of training. As the administrator of the program, it is your job to help determine what type of training is needed, locate the training if it is not internal, and schedule it. If there is a fee for the training, then it is also a part of the administrator's job to find funds to cover the training, if any exist. Many times, there are no funds included with mandated reforms, making it unusually challenging for administration to get faculty fully on board with the direction of the mandate.

Structure

Structure is the area where the administration of implementing new reforms is most prevalent and can be complicated. "The resources applied to implementation must integrate with existing processes and agencies, without causing extensive disruption, competition or conflict" (Boundless, 2016, para. 1). Structure involves working closely with other departments on campus, working within the confines of system requirements, and following institutional policies and procedures. Below are some examples of integration that may occur:

- *Academic Departments:* If the reform mandate is going to impact another academic departments, they may need to be brought into the conversation regarding curriculum and processes.
- *Advising:* If the reform mandate will target a specific placement score, a change in which students are allowed to participate, or a change in how students are counseled/advised, then the advisors should be brought into the conversation to determine policy. Advisors can also be instrumental in recruiting students for programs and initiatives. Ensuring that there is a strong partnership with advisors is essential to the success of the students.
- *Registrar:* The registrar's office must be involved if any course is going to be added or changed to the institution's scheduling and student systems. In many cases, they should be called upon early in the process to ensure that what faculty are planning can actually be done on the systems. Some of the following areas need to be addressed:

- Creating the course name and number.
 - Determining the part of term, grade window, and instructor of record for the course.
 - Establishing registration activities to be implemented.
 - Determining what reporting data needs to be given to the state, if any.
- *Curriculum Committee:* If a brand-new course is being created due to the reform mandate the program must adhere to the institutional policies regarding course creation. This is a lengthy process in many institutions taking up to a year or more.
 - *Human Resources, Payroll, and Budget Offices:* If the program is outside the traditional 16-week long semester or 8-week short semester, faculty may have to have an additional appointment. In order to staff the reform mandate and pay faculty for working the initiative, human resources, payroll and the budget offices must be contacted to ensure that appointments are created and processed correctly and that funds are available to pay faculty. This also may require the approval of the provost or upper administration and may take some time to get the needed approvals.
 - *Institutional Research Offices:* All programs need to be evaluated. Being able to track the students and their success in many cases lies in the institutional research office. In order to collect the correct data, this office should be brought into the conversation once all course structure is determined with the registrar's office. By working with this office, it ensures that you get official institutional data.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the program for its success or failure is a necessary step in making modifications to the program. The type of analysis should be determined at the outset by both faculty and administrators. Qualitative data can be used to gather student feedback on the program and quantitative data that can be used to determine student success. The quantitative data may be tracked internally or it may be tracked by the institution's research office. A partnership should be formed with the institutional research office to

identify and gather data for such an evaluation. This process can be lengthy, so discussion must take place whether to evaluate using this method. Otherwise, tracking data internally may be the better option. Either way, knowing the success of students is critical to making adjustments. At the end of each program, data should be gathered and analyzed and results disseminated.

Because developmental students are at a higher risk of not completing their degree, efforts are made to find innovative ways to help students succeed. Reforms, however, tend to target the developmental education coursework instead of looking holistically at the student. “Reform efforts focus on a relatively small piece of the process of college student retention and completion while ignoring larger and equally or even more important pieces” (Boylan, Bonham, & Calderwood, 2017, p. 3). Developmental education is a small piece of the puzzle. Fortunately, those who administer developmental education programs see the bigger picture and understand the challenges in implementing mandated reforms. While implementation of new programs can be exciting, and faculty can be creative and innovative regarding ways to implement a reform mandate, there must be someone who can work to set up the reforms within the confines of the institutional processes and policies. Frankly, administration is an important part of a successful developmental education program and building partnerships across the institution is critical to successful implementation.

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About the Author



Currently the Director of Developmental Math at the University of Texas at El Paso, Denise Lujan has worked for UTEP for 15 years and has been the director for Developmental Math for 10 years. Denise received her Bachelor's from West Texas A&M University in Math in 1988 and her Master's in Educational Leadership in 2008 with a focus on Developmental Education. She has been very involved in the Texas Association for Developmental Education (TADE) and was a board member from 2008 to 2014. She is a member of the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE), was the Co-Chair for the NADE 2014 national conference held in Dallas, and served as the NADE Board Secretary from 2014 to 2016. She is currently a member of the Emeritus NADE Board. She is a member of Texas College Reading and Learning Association and was honored with the award for Developmental Educator of the Year in 2016. She has presented at local, state, and national conferences, including the National Math Summit held at NADE 2016 in Anaheim. She has presented at many different colleges and universities around the country on the use of ALEKS and developing summer bridge programs, non-course based options, and successful implementation of individualized programs. In 2014, The University of Texas at El Paso Developmental Math Department won the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Star Award for contribution to the state's Closing the Gaps plan.

Reconsidering the MOOC: 10 Years of Progress?

William J. Barry
Concordia University

Access and affordability remain central concerns in the developmental education discussion (Braun, 2016; Floyd, Felsher, & Ramdin, 2016), and as the results of Moore's Law continue to bring the world cheaper and more powerful technology, stakeholders turn to ones and zeroes for possible solutions.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) represent one such proposal enjoying ample coverage in the literature (e.g., Bastedo, 2016; McClure, 2016). The online format allows learners to follow a course from anywhere, and such ease of access has seen MOOC offerings increase since the first in 2008 (Downes, 2008), with the number of participants now into the tens of millions (Siemens, 2015).

MOOC advocates suggest the format increases access to high-quality education while decreasing costs (Carey, 2012; Teo, 2015), and critics worry about the threat of low academic rigor, while suggesting such courses profit at the expense of faculty and students (Axmann, & Atkins, 2016; Marshall, 2014).

Despite the robust and growing nature of the MOOC debate, critiques rarely consider college students' perceptions and attitudes. Some narrow exceptions include Zhou (2016), who considered Chinese students' perspectives on self-determination as they related to MOOC participation, and Zutshi, O'Hare, & Rodafinos (2013), who relied on a handful of blog posts from former MOOC students.

While administrators, faculty, and media argue apace, how students view MOOCs remains unclear. As an educator in the developmental space, I view students as primary stakeholders. As such, I expect MOOC policy to benefit students first. (For a fuller exploration of the student/faculty stakeholder discussion, see Abidin, 2015). Student educational experience faces significant transformation in the wake of widespread MOOC implementation,

and we should be asking questions now about how students will perceive and value such a transformation.

One noteworthy aspect of the coming transformation has already begun at MIT and several subsequent institutions around the world. MITx (the online portal for MOOC courses) now offers a series of MOOCs that can lead to a MicroMaster's credential, and eventual admission to an accelerated graduate program on campus (Kiers, 2016), opening up an elite education to learners around the world. In the wake of MIT's decision, thirteen additional universities from around the world began MicroMaster's offerings and launched 18 new programs (Office of Digital Learning, 2016).

In light of these and other innovations, I expect researchers and faculty interested in MOOCs to focus on how students perceive the issues and opportunities suggested above and how they weigh the value of alternative curricula in general. DeLuca, Ogden, and Pero (2015) have pointed to ample research on educator preparation, but note how few studies have considered the value of alternative curriculum-preparation, particularly integrated approaches (Grossman, 2005), many of which now present themselves in a MOOC-saturated world (Cronin & Carroll, 2013; Odom & Lindsey, 2016). I expect that new research will begin to emerge addressing the gap.

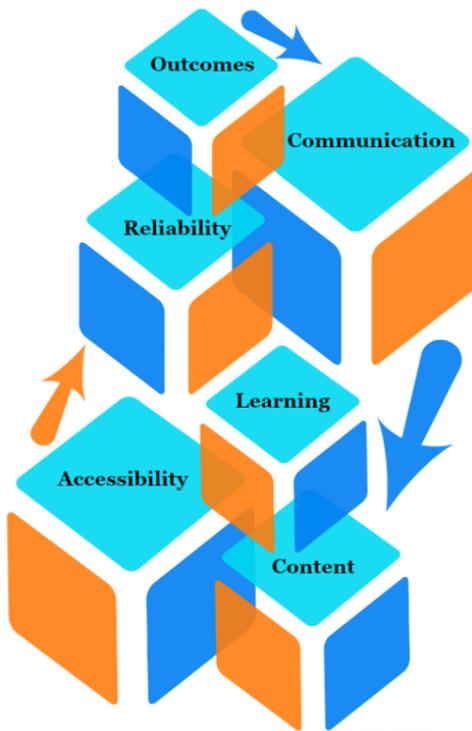
Such expectations drew my attention to study in which Cole and Timmerman (2015) examined students' MOOC perceptions. Using thematic analysis, the researchers suggested students believe MOOCs hold the potential to augment lifelong learning, a sentiment anticipated by Carneiro (2007) in pre-MOOC work on technology integration, even though they serve as inferior alternatives to traditional coursework (see, Axmann & Atkins, 2016; Marshall, 2014).

Students made their determinations based on several interesting criteria (see Figure), including accessibility, communication, content, learning, outcomes, and reliability, which suggest a deeper appreciation for what works in education, an appreciation from which we might all benefit, were we to pay it some mind. For a more thorough discussion of student perceptions and of why they matter so much, see Campbell and Mislevy (2013).

These kinds of nuanced student responses also suggest the value of asking deeper questions about MOOC utility, rather than yielding to seductive pro/con binaries.

Answers to such questions inform decisions with regard to the place of MOOCs in higher education, and those decisions stand to affect each one of us in yet unseen ways. Moody's Investor Service has suggested college closures could triple, and mergers could double in the coming years (as cited in Woodhouse, 2015). Low enrollment and subsequently low revenues are to blame. As a longtime observer of the higher education landscape, I have to wonder if the availability of high-caliber, low-cost alternatives might not already be taking a toll on the status quo, and if that toll might not continue at institutions, which lack the nimbleness to adapt.

The MOOC Question: What Matters to Students?



Themes adapted from Cole & Timmerman, 2015

Figure. The MOOC Question: What Matters to Students is based on themes adapted from Cole, A. W., & Timmerman, C. E. (2015). What do current college students think about MOOCs? *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 11, 188-201.

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Centering Disability Support in the Learning Center

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Disability support in higher education has its roots in a more general educational access tradition that dates back much further than the 1990 and 2008 reauthorized the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 (Department of Justice, 2009). In the 1950s, for example, Dr. John King hired football players to assist a teacher candidate who was a wheelchair user, and he began a long career of advocacy for physical access to campus spaces (Fleischer & Zames, 2001). In a similar fashion, the learning assistance movement that gained traction in the 1970s and spread through major universities benefited many students with disabilities and highlighted the need for new academic partnerships (Boylan, 1982).

In the post-ADA university environment, disability support services have been routinely offered to students, but the organizational structures have varied quite widely—some resources were located in medical schools; some in student services; some in the Provost’s office or in academic services—and some were actually housed within learning assistance programs (LAPs) or academic centers (Trammell, 2005).

Of all the possible models to choose from for organizational structure, a strong argument can be made that disability support services (DSS) fits most effectively within the learning center for programmatic, philosophical, and assessment purposes. Such a model incorporates the best in current thought about disability accessibility, universal design in learning, and the dynamic role of learning support in connecting with the college/university curricula.

The following is an abbreviated list gathered from personal observation of practical and logical reasons that justify such an organizational concept:

- Philosophically, disability support is a natural effort to foster equal access to education; this is the core mission of learning assistance.
- In terms of accommodation, differentiation, remediation, and elaboration, all learning assistance programs potentially can benefit from shared pedagogical resources, ranging from general tutoring programs to reading programs targeted specifically at students with dyslexia—silos can actually create more inequity.
- Increasingly, students with disabilities are overrepresented in learning assistance programs and LAPs can therefore benefit from connecting DSS resources.
- Learning centers tend to have more elaborate administrative structures which actually can benefit more traditionally isolated DSS units.
- Learning assistance has a rich literature and expertise that overlaps with DSS and its relatively newer and unfolding history.
- Disability is being conceptualized in the ongoing disability rights movement (DRM) as mainstream, and therefore college students shouldn't be isolated or set apart in any stigmatizing manner (a good reason not to house DSS in the medical school if possible).
- Universal Design in Learning (UDL) increasingly suggests that the gestalt of learning success requires overlapping access to resources and core learning skills across varied student demographics and needs.

In recent history, a movement to centralize learning resources in a geographic space, like the library or a learning commons—and including DSS in that organization—has been growing in popularity, particularly as schools remodel older spaces such as libraries (Trammell, 2005). This movement attempts in part a “normalization” of academic support and resources that aims specifically to reduce stigma and increase ease of accessibility. It also focuses on the practical, which means that students should be able to find what they need easily, and connect it to other resources. The library as *learning nerve center* has been central to many

reconceptualizations of learning assistance (Delohery, 2006; Houston, 2015).

Disability has been increasingly normalized in the wider popular culture. As a result, students come to college/university expecting disability to be framed in the wider popular context. This may, in fact, become a problem for DSS offices in the long run, but in the short run it means that DSS needs to be seen as equal and valued the way other academic resources are (DeLee, 2015; Trammell, 2009). A logical way to do that is to avoid isolating DSS, and instead to place it where everything else is *normal*. Some places, like the state of Florida, have attempted to normalize disability and giftedness as variations of exceptionality and program accordingly. There is also an unspoken promise in the concept of universal design that suggests that students may need fewer accommodations if the academic program is more effectively designed for all learners (Black, Weinberg, & Brodwin, 2015).

Each institution is different, of course, and will have its own unique circumstances. Program assessment is also critical, in order to determine the effectiveness of current or potential organizational structures (Trammell, 2005). Many DSS offices, or their organizational units, do not engage in consistent and thorough assessment, in part due to privacy and confidentiality concerns. Increasingly, however, there is both practical and philosophical evidence that centering the disability support office in the learning center makes good sense for many institutions and will greatly benefit students, as well as administrators who are trying to stretch budgets and cross-connect resources on campus and make better data-driven decisions.

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Implementing Contextualization Into the Integrated Reading and Writing (IRW) Classroom: Making IRW “Worth It”

Jessica Slentz Reynolds & Amber Sarker
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The importance of contextualization within postsecondary contexts has been embraced by the state of Texas, as shown by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s (THECB) Accelerate Texas Initiative (THECB, 2016). Contextualization, in short, is the teaching and development of basic skills and knowledge within a specific disciplinary topic (Perin, 2011). Perin (2011) claims that transfer of learning theories and learner motivation theories suggest that contextualization is one means of improving instructional methods within the postsecondary context. According to the THECB (2016), Accelerate Texas programs are designed to integrate or contextualize basic reading, math, and writing skills with workforce training, providing students with opportunities for college transition and entry into high demand occupations. The Education Institute (TEI), a grant-funded center within the College of Education at Texas State University, has provided educators with contextualized professional development modules that can be utilized in a variety of postsecondary courses.

Contextualization in Developmental Education Contexts

TEI created a module specifically addressing the need for contextualization within postsecondary courses that is easily applicable and adaptable for Integrated Reading and Writing (IRW) courses. This particular module, The Self-Change Power Project, was adapted from *Academic Transformation: The Road to College Success*, and it can help students monitor their progress towards reaching behavioral goals (Sellers, Dochen, & Hodges, 2015). The Self-Change Power

Project was originally intended to help students enrolled in student success courses document and track behaviors regarding time management, mindfulness, wellness, and study habits (Sellers et al., 2015). However, TEI adapted the Self-Change Power Project to focus on work-related behaviors for students enrolled in developmental education courses. This contextualized approach allows for an opportunity for students to brainstorm, practice, and reflect on requisite behaviors for future employment.

Contextualization and IRW

Perin (2011) emphasized how contextualization can increase students' "mastery of basic skills as well as the likelihood of transfer of basic skills to content courses that are not occurring in traditional, decontextualized learning environments" (p. 286). According to Perin, contextualization can increase students' intrinsic motivation and level of engagement in the classroom because it allows the subject to be deemed useful and interesting to learners. After reading Perin's work, the authors of this article were reminded of the seminal text on IRW by Bartholomae and Petrosky (1986), where they argued that IRW courses should not only be a study skills course consisting of workbooks and diagramming sentences, but IRW should help students acquire the necessary literacies to be successful in both academic and workplace discourses.

After making the connection between Perin's (2011) work on contextualization and Bartholomae's and Petrosky's (1986) theory on IRW, the authors of this article, who also teach IRW and research developmental education populations, decided to modify the Self-Change Power Project to help students achieve the learning objectives for the expository unit of the semester: the Discourse Community Analysis (DCA). It is common for IRW instructors to assign an expository unit centered around the students' future careers; however, it is critical to also provide the opportunity for students to familiarize themselves with their future careers in a way that transcends a basic description of their potential professions (Bartholomae & Petrosky, 1986).

Process for Implementing Contextualization Into IRW

Since IRW is a reading and writing course, the expository unit can be utilized to help students understand the various literacies in their chosen fields of study. Ideally, the students complete a 6-week

DCA project where they not only research the many facets of communication within their potential careers, but they also observe and participate within these communities. Following their research, observations, and reflections on their participation with their selected community, the students must present through either traditional essay format or by a formal presentation to the class, the goals, types of communication, language, membership, and the significance of literacy within their chosen community (Wardle & Downs, 2011). Three questions originally guided the expository unit to make IRW *worth it*:

- Does assigning a DCA on students' future careers lead to students having a stronger understanding of academic and workplace literacies?
- Does implementing a comprehensive project that focuses on students' individual goals increase motivation for students to complete the IRW course?
- Could an alternative version of the Self-Change Power Project accomplish these goals?

The following is a brief timeline of activities leading up to the final product for the DCA project:

- Students brainstorm and research types of communication, language, behaviors, and various literacies of their future careers.
- Students decide what types of communication, language, behaviors, and various literacies of their future careers they want to observe, participate in, and monitor for 4-5 weeks.
- Students participate in their selected communities and keep a journal about their experiences. They are prompted to write about what they observed, how they participated within the community, and how literacy is an integral aspect of their community.
- In the last week of the unit, students showcase through writing, class discussion, and photographic evidence their processes and experiences participating in their chosen communities.
- Students submit their completed DCA project for a grade via essay or in-class presentation.

The project timeline was derived from combining components of the Self-Change Power Project guidelines (The Education Institute, 2016), IRW best practices (Bartholomae & Petrosky, 1986), and Wardle and Down's (2011) work on integrating students' discourse communities into postsecondary writing classrooms.

Findings and Discussion

The DCA project aligns with what Goen and Gillotte-Tropp (2003) referred to as the six principles of an IRW program: integration, time, development, academic membership, sophistication, and purposeful communication. Based on feedback from two sections of IRW, the authors of this article received an overwhelming amount of positive responses from students who completed the DCA project. Students stated that the project helped them decide if their selected major was the right path for them, the act of observing, understanding, and researching their communities forced students to use a variety of skills and resources they had not yet used in college, and finally, students reported that it made them see the benefits to taking an IRW course. Based on the students' responses, implementing contextualization into the IRW classroom allows students to integrate literacies from other aspects of their lives into the IRW classroom. The project also encourages students to be an active member of academia through the extensive research process necessary to complete the DCA. Finally, students complete this project with the skills and knowledge needed to not only purposefully communicate in the classroom, but they are familiar with the different literacies and communicative acts within their future professions.

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Social Media and Three Kinds of Student Engagement: A Conceptual Framework for Innovation in E-Learning

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In a recent face-to-face class, a student's public speaking anxiety was once again flaring up, making it likely that she would again disappear, not give her final presentation, and fail the class, this time threatening her graduation. To combat this anxiety, I created a private Facebook event, "[Student] Presents her Analysis in Rhetoric Class" for the date she was scheduled to present and invited her. The student only clicked that she was *interested* in the Facebook event, as opposed to *going*. Reticence. I interacted with her on that page, joked with her, and eventually negotiated a different date for her to present. At some point, she moved from *interested* to *going*. On the day of her presentation, I posted hourly updates in the group about how I was getting ready for the event, etc. She showed up. She gave the speech. It was excellent.

How do we, as a field of scholars, talk about that kind of practice given our fossilized state of discourse? Whether or not e-learning works is a question which no longer has meaning. It makes no sense to treat both a course with primarily voice-overed PowerPoints and multiple-choice tests and a course which primarily uses readings followed by discussion-board debates to build student research papers as the same independent variable. What they share as online modes is so small compared to their vast pedagogical differences. Yet, on the other side of the abstraction spectrum, granular analysis of individual techniques is a relatively unhelpful and inevitably obsolescent practice, just like Kashmar's (1997) report on

using cut-out circles to demonstrate molecules on an overhead projector or Hunter's (1979) report on techniques with the slide rule.

This article is an attempt to carve out a piece of the larger conceptual framework we all need to develop in this area. Specific social media practices are reviewed and categorized in support.

Reification Versus Granularity?

In higher ed debates (see Wojciechowska, 2010) and in popular discourse (see Haynie, 2015), e-learning is often treated as a clear and unified practice. For 10 years we have been publishing studies which find that face-to-face and computer-mediated learning have similar effects on learning (Van Schaik, Barker, & Beckstrand, 2003; Mativo, Hill, & Godfrey, 2013), yet each online course seems to have a different design. Additionally, although educators also believe that social media is good for learning, Facebook, to take one platform, sometimes works (Kivunja, 2015) and sometimes does not (Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane, 2011), and my reading of the studies tells me that it depends on what educators use it for and how. Some studies direct their arguments toward those differences of practice, but many seem more interested in the purported uniqueness of their samples or technological tools than in drawing connections with other work, which, in many cases, is in unread journals in other fields. Here is a sample of rhetoric from recently published studies: "This is the first qualitative study, to our knowledge, to incorporate the perceptions of postgraduate end-users of the quality of their e-learning" (de Leeuw, Westerman, & Scheele, 2017, p. 161), and "This is the first study of its kind exploring the effectiveness of an e-learning module to influence knowledge and reasoning of OT students" (Gee, Strickland, Thompson, & Miller, 2017, p. 5).

In reviewing the growing literature on e-learning and social media and the various course practices that bridge them, it is clear, as with PowerPoint an educational generation ago, that when we drill down to exact practices, some things work (see, I'm sure, the past fifteen years of each of our teaching, right?) and some don't (Adams, 2006). Yet, specific analysis of individual techniques is in some ways an intellectual trap. Technologies change rapidly. We need to build a larger set of conceptual frameworks between treating all e-learning as a variable and granular analysis of techniques. Perhaps on Tuesday,

students respond well to me *liking* their posts. But by Friday, they don't care as much, and I need to interact with them differently.

We need clearer conceptual baskets we can develop theory around. For example, although we often study the impacts of teachers' face-to-face *nonverbal immediacy* (see Wei & Weng, 2010), the set of practices that constitute nonverbal immediacy are wide-ranging and often idiosyncratic. Thus, in studies like Wei and Wang's, we measure nonverbal immediacy as a collectivized, accumulated concept that remains reliably measurable even though there is no granular discussion of something like head-nod frequency.

To that end, I suggest three related engagement concepts which emerged from my data and experience: *engagement-facilitating structures*, *engagement-facilitating practices*, and *external publics engagement*.

I used the following social media practices in six different classes:

- Blogs: Students post data analysis, drafts, final projects, they and peer review them publicly.
- Public Blog Comments: Alumni/outside experts invited to critique student work.
- Discussion via Facebook Group/Event: Including alumni/experts.
- Students Publicized Work: They shared work created on Instagram and blogs via Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Qualitative assessment and the kinds of simple quantification we can do with small classes were undertaken. The following positive outcomes seemed evident.

Engagement-Facilitating Structures

E-learning and social media applications and assignments can be customized to foster interaction. Threaded discussions are an example. Social media versions of those, which push notifications of comments, are an additional component. Chat features are one level. Video chat is another.

Social media is structured for engagement. Modifications of structure can be undertaken to increase this for coursework. Discussion boards on courseware can feel like a waste-of-time, count-my-comments-for-the-grade echo chamber. One student's evaluation of the social media alternative was: "Keep doing the discussions on Facebook, it makes it more fun and much easier to

stay on top of the posts.” Not only did the platform allow for notifications to their phones, which decreased the amount of time between the posting of follow-up comment posts in comparison to courseware, but the students enjoyed the engagement.

Another measure of this is that, even though our courseware allows students to create discussion threads, only once in ten years has a student ever done that, whereas in a recent class which utilized Facebook, I initiated 31 discussion threads and the students initiated 32. Some of the student-initiated threads were humorous and many were about technical or writing struggles the students were experiencing. One student’s post about his struggle getting his paper to the word count led to a 19-post exchange and another student posting a screenshot of her paper prewriting, inviting the original poster to “Feel free to use any of those if you don’t have it already.” I have never seen that kind of productive collaboration in courseware.

Challenges in this area were apparent, as well. Nontraditional students sometimes had troubles of being unwilling/critical of social media, self-doubt due to lack of familiarity, and higher privacy concerns. Traditional students had difficulty adjusting to violation of *fun* space and difficulty with academic self-promotion, and they often juggled multiple accounts to separate their online class identity from their *real* one. This all required instructor time in explanation and management.

Engagement-Facilitating Practices

There are scores of pedagogical techniques we might use to engage students within the larger structures we develop. I analyzed the use of two such techniques in these classes.

Gamified e-learning practices work better on social media than in courseware. For example, debates have more at stake and engage the public in participation, which elevates the quality of discourse and modulates aggressive tone. In exactly half of my online courses where I did not use social media, I had to intervene because of aggressive and/or inappropriate communication. In classes with social media, that has never happened.

Creative projects get a larger audience and thus bigger reaction. In one class, a student creative project received 5 Facebook reactions (like, love, etc.) within three minutes of posting. That

simply never happens in courseware, and it is important given some students' reticence with creative work.

External Publics Engagement

There are a variety of ways to include participants not enrolled in the class, ranging from alumni to service learning outreach to simply posting into the ether and seeing what draws attention. I used public Facebook groups for two classes and blogs whose posts were tweeted in the other four.

Public work is better work (see Reilly, 1995), especially when outside voices tell them to improve it. Although length of writing is not the same as quality, there is a relationship (Ferrari, Bouffard, & Rainville, 1998). In one class, in the absence of grading or comment from me, student blog posts increased in length by 63%, from an average of 487 to 770 words, immediately following a blog comment by a professional in the field to which the course content was related.

My departmental alumni loved the opportunity to reconnect with professors and students in this way and share their new skills and perspectives. Mentoring happened in many cases (For example, "As someone who has worked in the press and now works in PR, it's something we struggle with every day. . .").

Conclusion

In summary, adding some specific social media venues and techniques to my classes brought interesting changes in outcomes. For coursework that can be public this approach has exciting potential.

The possibilities of e-learning pedagogy are at least as rich and varied as in face-to-face classes. This report was designed to encourage us to break out of abstraction and to explore practices and their impacts, but within a larger conceptual framework. We need to develop a more coherent body of e-learning theory that can link practitioners publishing in their field's education journals with other scholars, while at the same time building more coherent accounts of the real differences between different online pedagogies. This article is a basic attempt to suggest a part of that framework.

The lesson learned from this analysis is not about blogs or Facebook, but is instead about a pedagogical approach that undergirds our planning and adaptation as instructors. I have found success with techniques that grow out of three different approaches to student engagement. As technologies change, that focus will guide my adaptation.

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The Many Legacies of Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein, Part 1 Tribute: Learning Frameworks Courses

Russ Hodges & Taylor W. Acee
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*“Much have I learned from my teachers, more from my colleagues,
but most from my students.” ~Talmud, Ta’anit 7b*

Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein was Professor Emeritus at the University of Texas at Austin. Weinstein is renowned for groundbreaking research on learning strategies, her Model of Strategic Learning, and as senior author of the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory*. Weinstein’s research and practice in strategic learning has helped to define theoretically-based postsecondary academic success courses, curriculum, and instruction across the U.S. and abroad, and especially in Texas; her legacy lives on in her many students and her students’ students. Of particular interest for this tribute (Part 1) is her college-level, 3-credit, learning frameworks course, created in 1975 at the University of Texas at Austin offered within the Department of Educational Psychology. EDP 304, Strategic Learning for the Twenty-First Century (formerly EDP 310, Individual Learning Skills),

explores a wide range of subjects in educational psychology that impact student learning, including theories of cognition and motivation, and applying them to academic work. Appropriate for students...seeking to improve performance in their classes, as well as those experiencing difficulty succeeding academically at the University (College of Education, 2017, para. 2).

Course content is driven by Weinstein’s Model of Strategic Learning, which emphasizes that strategic learning emerges from the interactions among elements within four major components: skill,

will, self-regulation, and the academic environment. Weinstein attributes many of her ideas about strategic learning to one of her mentors, Wilbert J. McKeachie, and his research at the University of Michigan on strategic teaching (Weinstein, 1994; Weinstein, et al., 2012). McKeachie and his colleagues also developed a 4-credit hour learning framework course in 1982 titled *Learning to Learn* (Pintrich, McKeachie, & Lin, 1987).

In 1999, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THEBC) authorized formula funding of up to three credit hours for courses following a learning frameworks curriculum, which must include, "...1) research and theory in the psychology of learning, cognition, and motivation, 2) factors that impact learning, and 3) application of learning strategies" (Hill, 2000, para. 4). The policy change was a result of two learning framework course studies, one from the University of Texas at Austin (focused on EDP 310, *Individual Learning Skills*) and the other from Texas State University (focused on EDP 1350, *Effective Learning*), which presented statistically significant effects of these learning framework courses on student retention and graduation rates, compared to students who did not enroll in these courses (Hill, 2000).

While many colleges have developed academic success courses and programs to help students negotiate the transition into tertiary education, Weinstein's course differed significantly in pedagogy. Traditional study skills instruction teaches students specific techniques and methods, usually in isolation—such as time management, note-taking, textbook annotation—focusing on acquisition of a skill or strategy but not a comprehensive understanding of why and how learning can be enhanced by using that technique. Many study skills courses are taught in tandem with developmental or remedial course sequences incorporating curriculum to help rectify students' basic skills deficits. Additionally, many first-year experience courses combine study skills with curriculum to prepare and guide incoming freshmen students as they transition from high school to college. According to Nordell (2009), many of these programs also focus on the social aspects of this transition such as creating new social networks and adjusting to independent college living. Weinstein developed her course to focus on learning strategy applications, but also to inform students of

research and theoretical frameworks that underpin each strategy. Students first assess their own learning strengths and weaknesses (e.g. LASSI) so that, once introduced to learning theories and strategies, students can better understand the reasons for engaging in specific studying behaviors. Practicing learning strategies with their other course content is essential for the transfer of this knowledge (Hodges & Agee, 2009; Hodges, Sellers, & Dochen, 2012). Weinstein cleverly interweaved behavioral, affective, and cognitive domains of learning theories and strategies to help increase students' self-regulatory abilities, self-efficacy, motivation, metacognition, deep learning processes, and goal orientation—among many other topics derived from her Strategic Learning Model.

While learning frameworks courses are offered throughout U.S. postsecondary institutions, Texas has been at the forefront; approximately 90% of 2-year institutions and 75% of 4-year institutions offer multiple sections of these courses. Many of Texas's 2-year institutions now require all first-year students to enroll in the course while 4-year institutions more typically offer the course to special populations such as conditionally-admitted students or students on academic probation. High schools are also now beginning to offer learning frameworks courses as dual-credit courses (Acee & Hodges, 2017).

Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein was a pioneer in postsecondary access and success; she knew that every student could learn, and she dedicated her life to that end. Learning frameworks courses are one of her many legacies. We honor her memory as we continue to expand the reach and effectiveness of these courses and help students to become more strategic and self-regulated lifelong learners.

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The Many Legacies of Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein, Part 2 Tribute: Strategic Learning Assessment

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If you see a student who finds it as hard as iron to study, it is because his studies are without system." ~ Talmud, Ta'anit

In Part 1 of our tribute to Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein, we discussed her pioneering work on learning frameworks courses (Hodges & Acee, 2017). In Part 2, we examine Weinstein's contributions to the development of strategic learning assessments.

Weinstein is senior author of the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)*, which assesses students' use of learning strategies related to developing knowledge and skills, generating and sustaining motivation, and intentionally self-regulating thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to reach learning goals. Weinstein's groundbreaking dissertation research on cognitive learning strategies (Weinstein, 1975), and her subsequent work with the U.S. Army and Department of Defense (Weinstein, 1978), helped to show that students' could be taught to use learning strategies intentionally, and learning strategies instruction could help students to create more meaningful and retrievable memories about the information they are trying to learn. This line of research led to the development of Weinstein's Model of Strategic Learning (MSL; see Weinstein & Acee, 2013, for a detailed description), which serves as the theoretical foundation of the *LASSI*.

The MSL (Weinstein, Acee, & Jung, 2010) highlights many of the factors that research has shown to be causally related to students' academic success, and amendable to change through educational intervention. The MSL (see Figure) organizes these factors under three major components: skill, will, and self-regulation. Skill involves

knowing what to do (e.g., knowing about effective note-taking strategies) and knowing how to do it (e.g., being able to effectively and efficiently use note-taking strategies across different situations).

Summarizing the material in one’s own words, generating analogies, teaching the material to someone else, and creating graphic organizers are all examples of learning strategies that fall under the skill component of the MSL. Will refers to the “wanting to” of learning, and involves various psychological factors that influence

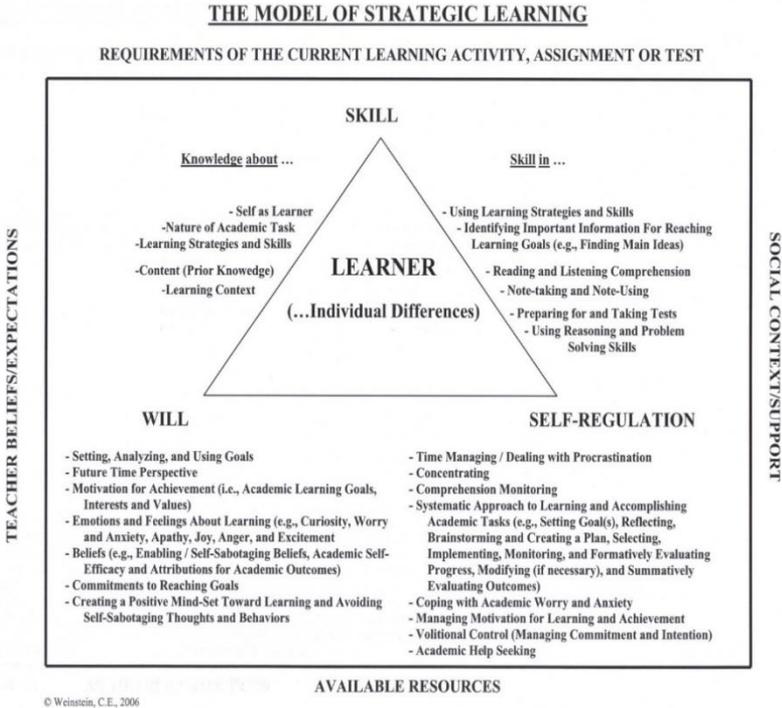


Figure. The Model of Strategic Learning (MSL) is from Weinstein, C. E., Acee, T. W., & Jung, J. H. (2010). Learning strategies. In B. McGaw, P. L. Peterson, & E. Baker (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education* (3rd ed., pp. 323-329). New York, NY: Elsevier. Copyright 2006 by Claire Ellen Weinstein. Reprinted with permission.

students' motivation such as their beliefs, values, goals, and mindsets. Examples of learning strategies that fall under the will component include: analyzing one's goals, developing a future time perspective, using positive self-talk, generating reasons for why learning is important, and cultivating a growth mindset. Self-regulation involves actively monitoring and managing the entire learning process. Learning strategies that fall under the self-regulation component of the MSL include concentrating, time managing, comprehension monitoring, and help seeking (Weinstein, Acee, & Jung, 2010).

The MSL emphasizes that students can intentionally use learning strategies related to their skill, will, and self-regulation to increase their chances of success in college and other postsecondary settings. The MSL also includes a fourth component, the academic environment. Although the academic environment is typically not under students' direct control, it is important for students to develop knowledge about the academic environment (e.g., learning about available resources on campus and their teachers' expectations) so they can be more strategic.

The *LASSI* measures students' use of learning strategies related to their skill, will, and self-regulation, and it is intended for use with students in postsecondary educational and training environments (although other versions of the *LASSI* have been developed for use with students in high school and online learning environments). The *LASSI* is widely used across the United States and around the globe by over 3,000 institutions ("LASSI," 2017) and has been translated into over 30 languages (C. E. Weinstein, personal communication, 2010, October 12). The *LASSI* 3rd Edition has 10 scales and 60 items, 6 items per scale (Weinstein, Acee, & Palmer, 2016a). The *LASSI* scales include: Anxiety, Attitude, Concentration, Information Processing, Motivation, Selecting Main Ideas, Self-Testing, Test Strategies, Time Management, and Using Academic Resources (see Appendix for scale descriptions and example items). The *LASSI* 3rd Edition Manual (Weinstein, Palmer, & Acee, 2016b) provides information about the extensive development work that helped to establish the reliability and validity of the *LASSI*, and the procedures used to construct national norms.

Weinstein published the first edition of the *LASSI* in 1987 to help address increasing enrollments of students in postsecondary

educational settings who were underprepared or at-risk of low performance. At that time, there were no strategic learning assessments that measured cognitive, metacognitive, motivation, and affective learning strategies. Dr. Weinstein needed such a measurement tool in order to provide students with feedback about their use of learning strategies, and to measure their growth over time in response to strategic learning interventions, such as learning frameworks courses. Accordingly, the *LASSI* can be used to provide informative feedback to students, practitioners, and researchers about (a) students' baseline status as a strategic learner, (b) which areas related to strategic learning to address in instruction for individual students and the class, or cohort, as a whole, (c) how students' use of learning strategies changes over time, and (d) the effectiveness of interventions for students (for more detailed uses, see Weinstein, Palmer, & Acee, 2016b).

Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein's significant contributions to learning strategies research, learning frameworks courses, and strategic learning assessments helped to shape research, policy, and practice in many disciplines, but especially in postsecondary developmental education and learning assistance. Her lasting legacy of student-centered support lives on through the work of her students and colleagues.

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Appendix
LASSI 3rd Edition Scale Descriptions and Example Items

LASSI Scale	Description of Scale	Example Item
Anxiety	Worry and nervousness about school and academic performance.	“I feel very panicky when I take an important test.”
Attitude	Attitudes and interest in college and succeeding academically.	“I only study the subjects I like.”
Concentration	Ability to direct and maintain attention on academic tasks.	“My mind wanders a lot when I study.”
Information Processing	Use of rehearsal, elaboration, and organizational strategies to learn new information.	“I try to find relationships between what I am learning and what I already know.”
Motivation	Self-discipline and willingness to exert effort and persist in college.	“When work is difficult I either give up or study only the easy parts.”
Selecting Main Ideas	Skill at identifying important information for further study.	“I have difficulty identifying the important points in my reading.”
Self-Testing	Use of reviewing and comprehension monitoring techniques to assess understanding.	“I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over or review what was said.”
Test Strategies	Use of strategies to prepare for and take examinations.	“I have difficulty adapting my studying to different types of courses.”
Time Management	Use of time management principles for academic tasks.	“I find it hard to stick to a study schedule.”

Using Academic Resources	Strategic use of academic resources commonly available at postsecondary institutions.	“I am not comfortable asking for help from instructors in my courses.”
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Note. The scale descriptions were adapted from Weinstein, Palmer, & Acee (2016b), with permission.

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Taylor W. Acee is Associate Professor in the Graduate Program in Developmental Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Texas State University. He earned his Ph.D. and M.A. in educational psychology at The University of Texas and his B.S. in psychology at the University of Pittsburgh. His program of research is focused on cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and affective factors that contribute to and detract from student success in postsecondary education. In his research, Acee targets variables that are causative, account for a meaningful amount of the variation in student success, and are amendable to change through educational intervention. He is internationally known for his collaborative work on personal relevance interventions, academic boredom, and strategic learning assessments and interventions. His research activities have resulted in over 30 refereed publications, 5 funded research grants totaling over \$800,000, and various other scholarly activities.

Russ Hodges is Associate Professor in the Graduate Program in Developmental Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Texas State University. He earned his Ed.D. in developmental education from Grambling State University and his M.Ed. from University of Louisiana in Monroe. Russ Hodges' research focuses on postsecondary student success, postsecondary student success courses, interventions for students diagnosed with

AD/HD, and demographic changes in higher education. The learning framework model that he co-developed serves as a curriculum model for many postsecondary learning framework courses throughout Texas and the nation. Hodges has held state and national leadership positions including president of the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) and chair of the Council of Learning Assistance and Developmental Education Associations (CLADEA). He is an active scholar, having published three books, many journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers along with four research grants totaling just over 1 million dollars. He is also a frequent invited speaker for conferences for postsecondary faculty and staff development. Hodges has received many awards, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the College Academic Support Programs conference, and outstanding service awards from both CRLA and the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE). In 2009, Russ Hodges was named National Fellow for CLADEA—his field’s most prestigious honor.

Mindful Instruction: Metacognitive Activities in the Developmental College Reading Classroom

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In college, developmental reading students can lack an accurate awareness of their own skills and abilities. Many developmental reading students believe they do not need to improve their reading skills and strategies (Vice, 2013). When students conclude that they do not need assistance with reading, they resist instruction meant to address their deficits (Lesley, 2004). Others, trapped in a cycle of developmental coursework, may abandon the idea of success due to motivational decline (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). Teachers can help developmental readers succeed with mindful instruction. Mindful instruction incorporates explicit teaching of content, skills, and strategies with metacognitive opportunities that encourage students to develop an awareness of their own capabilities.

Explicit Instruction of Content, Skills and Strategies

Reading instruction can improve with explicit instruction, through direct and clear teaching of skills, knowledge, and strategies. Teachers should provide a clear definition of the content, provide an explanation of the knowledge, model any behaviors or strategies, and follow with opportunities for group and independent learning. Explicit instruction in reading includes teaching students how to use context clues, interpret both implied and stated main ideas, identify supporting details, understand the relationship between text parts, comprehend narrative and expository text, make inferences, summarize, and to determine the text's pattern of organization.

However, direct (explicit) instruction does not guarantee that students can transfer their skills or strategies into new settings. Mindful instructors must take care in explaining any overlaps in content and skill, and clarify the flexibility of strategies. Otherwise, the *systematic division of skills* results (Alexander & Fox, 2004). When skills instruction centralizes reading solely on the student's deficiency area (in vocabulary, fluency, or comprehension) teaching may not result in long-term retention (Mallette, Schreiber, Caffey, Carpenter, and Hunter, 2009). Skill transfer requires the integration of cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational factors of learning (Broussard & Garrison, 2004). Mindful instructors are not only attentive to the skills, knowledge, and strategies that students need, but are also cognizant of opportunities that can help students read in varied contexts.

Metacognitive Capabilities

In order to promote the transfer of learning into other contexts, reading educators should introduce and continually reinforce the instruction of metacognition, *thinking about thinking* (Flavell, 1979). Students need metacognitive opportunities to think about and evaluate their own abilities and behaviors. Mindful instruction of metacognition is a form of responsive pedagogy. It provides explicit opportunities to self-evaluate skill and attitude over time (Moje, 2008). Metacognition Inventories (Miholic, 1994; Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002), think alouds (Afflerbach, 2002), and reflective journaling (Cubukcu, 2008) can help students self-assess skill and attitude in order to develop an understanding of one's own performance (Conley, 2005). In particular, students need to reflect on their thinking processes and review their assignments for growth. Mindful instruction is attentive to the benefits of metacognition, including the potential for increased focus, attention, motivation, and self-efficacy.

Students should also develop positive attitudes about reading in order to succeed. McKenna (1994) argued that reading attitudes emerge from three factors: students' belief about reading, their reading experiences, and the expectations of others around them. Moreover, positive feelings toward reading continually decrease. While McKenna's work focuses on students in grades 1-6, the implication is that students have reduced enthusiasm for reading

when they reach college. Research shows that explicit instruction addressing students' affective domain, such as opportunities to learn about student-support systems, addresses students' state of thinking (National Association for Developmental Education, 2011). Colleges can help develop the affective domain with placement advising, tutoring, and support programs (Bailey, 2009). However, addressing the affective domain in the classroom may be more challenging.

In a study of adolescent boys and girls, researchers found that *better metacognitive* knowledge improves text comprehension and increases self-efficacy in reading (Kolić-Vehovec, Rončević Zubković, and Pahljina-Reinić, 2014). Researchers also found that girls demonstrate better metacognitive knowledge and have more positive attitudes than boys have in response to recreational reading (Kolić-Vehovec et al., 2014). Male readers may need more encouragement. Therefore, reading instructors should incorporate metacognitive opportunities to deconstruct negative feelings about learning (Lesley, 2004) as well as activities that build one's literacy identity (Gee, 2002).

The Reading Mindset

Developmental students' perceptions of reading are rooted in their personal beliefs about their abilities (Lesley, 2004). Students who do not believe their abilities can improve remain stagnant in their ability to learn. Dweck (2006) argued that students who believe their skills and abilities cannot change suffer from a fixed mindset. Students with a fixed mindset lack motivation for learning and cannot cope with failure. They may attribute their failure to parental influence, cultural difference, or socioeconomic status (Reardon, 2013). Although research links academic achievement to socioeconomic background and psychological factors, the growth mindset can counter the effects of poverty (Claro, Paunesky, & Dweck, 2016) and cultural differences (Rattan Savani, Naidu, & Dweck., 2002). Dweck (2006) demonstrated that students perform better and are more likely to embrace learning if they believe that their intellectual abilities can change (growth mindset).

When paired with interventions that describe the brain as a developing muscle, lessons on study skills can help students change their mindset, or thinking about learning in order to improve skills

(Andersen & Nielsen, 2016). Students with a growth mindset are more likely to continue working toward success even when facing failure (Dweck, 2006). Instructing readers on the concept of mindset and requiring metacognitive intervention can reduce student resistance to learning by increasing self-regulation and efficacy (Matheson, 2015). Therefore, the mindful instruction of reading incorporates opportunities for students to think about thinking, notice and correct one's own negative mindset, and focus on the scientific process of learning rather than on accolades.

Developing Persistence

Analysis, interpretation, accuracy, problem solving, and persistence are among the necessary metacognitive capabilities for student success (Conley, 2005). Of those, the determining factor in success is persistence, or a combination of characteristics related to perseverance known as grit (Duckworth, 2016). Duckworth (2016) argued that grit is not only the persistence to accomplish goals in school, but it is also the most transferable characteristic. Students who develop perseverance in school are more successful in work and in life. Encouraging students to have fortitude may be the key for developmental readers who struggle when transferring skills and strategies into other contexts. For those readers trapped in a cycle of developmental coursework, determination is essential for success.

Teachers foster students' determination when they scaffold instruction (Hitt & Smith, 2017) and model the reading strategies that students need to learn from their own errors (Metcalf, 2017). More importantly, mindful instructors help students set learning goals. They provide students with opportunities to monitor their own progress and plan their own learning approaches as they complete activities to develop skills and strategies in reading (Roebbers, 2017). Furthermore, the most mindful teachers will represent a voice that encourages students to consult their goals and adjust their approach when met with adversity. Mindful instruction develops grit by providing metacognitive challenges that prompt students to reflect on their failures and develop plans to monitor, regulate, and direct their own thinking as they re-approach learning in the future.

Conclusion

This article provides tips for educators who wish to improve the instruction of college reading by promoting metacognition as an instructional element required for student success. Mindful instruction incorporates the explicit teaching of content, skills, and strategies with metacognitive opportunities for students to develop an accurate awareness of their own capabilities. Educators should explore practices and investigate the possibility of using Mindsets and Grit theories to address students' metacognition in the developmental reading classroom. When students review their mindset, they can begin to correct their internal voice and develop positive attitudes toward reading. When paired with lessons on grit, students discover the requirements for success in varied contexts. To become a mindful instructor, provide explicit instruction of the required skills and strategies for reading alongside activities that develop students' metacognitive capabilities.

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About the Author



After studying English Education in New Mexico, Tasha Vice earned a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Language and Literacy from Texas Tech University. Currently, she is an Assistant Professor of Reading at Texas A & M University- San Antonio. Her research centers on the metacognitive factors related to reading success and the teaching of reading.

Sparking Interest with Multimodal Assignments in Integrated Reading and Writing

Amber Sarker and Carolyn Caudle
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Integrated Reading and Writing (IRW) has become an increasingly popular option for developmental education literacy courses. While reading and writing should continuously be the focus of each assignment and text in IRW courses (Holschuh & Paulson, 2013), embracing students' digital literacies is an additional relevant and needed component of IRW instruction. The need for instructors to acknowledge and build on students' digital skills is a result of academia's shift from students being assigned static texts to complex and hybrid texts (Lea & Jones, 2011). Simply reading a news article online requires knowledge of hyperlinks, opening multiple tabs in a browser, and knowing how to navigate digital sources to retrieve additional information. The breadth of knowledge required to navigate multimodal sources is more complicated than simply reading a textbook. As a result, multimodal meaning making, or comprehending a message using a variety of modes, occurs in a many cultural practices, and emphasizing this in the IRW classroom would benefit students greatly (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). In order to provide context for this aforementioned research, our article briefly describes how an IRW course can use Adobe Spark to showcase connections students make in their personal lives in comparison to a novel read in class.

Today's postsecondary students incorporate the digital world in almost every facet of their lives. Students digitally document their lives using web-based social media applications that are intertwined and boundless. Whether viewing digital texts for school or pleasure, students are required to make judgements about the validity of the information and sources they regularly consume (Lea & Jones, 2011).

The authors of this article believe multimodality within an IRW course mirrors the social shift from conventional texts to digital and brings it into an academic context. While students may be familiar with multimodality, they are likely unaccustomed to practicing these modes in an academic setting. By utilizing multimodal texts and assignments within an IRW course, the authors of this article hope to reinforce and develop students' conventional reading and writing skills using a variety of digital modes that can transfer to future academic assignments.

Cope and Kalantzis (2009) stated that embracing multiliteracies allows students not to simply restate ideas, but become “transformers of meaning” (p. 115). The ability of students to transform meaning using digital literacies is the central focus of the IRW lesson the authors of this article are proposing. While many reading selections can provide connections to students' lives, our suggested assigned novel for this IRW unit is *Love and First Sight* by Josh Sundquist (2017). This novel is about a high school student, Will, who has been attending schools for the visually impaired his entire academic career, but decides to transfer to a mainstream high school (Sundquist, 2017). The text details his struggles and triumphs in this new environment (Sundquist, 2017). *Love and First Sight* was chosen so, after reading the novel, students could identify a time in their own life when they were challenged with an unfamiliar environment and were required to navigate using a new literacy (Sundquist, 2017). Students would then be asked to chronicle their own *fish out of water* experience using the free application Adobe Spark. Using this digital program, students could share their story using images, sound, and text to create a professional multimodal presentation.

College students are adept at navigating multimodal texts and resources. Unfortunately, this integration of technology often does not transfer to the classroom. To further prepare our students, embracing multimodal technology and making it the cornerstone of our instruction is paramount (Yu, 2014). Our suggested Adobe Spark storytelling project stresses the importance of new literacies in an IRW course and suggests a method utilizing visual and auditory modes that can be used to augment instruction.

Cope and Kalantzis (2009) explained, “Experiencing the known involves reflecting on our own experiences, interests, perspectives, familiar forms of expression and ways of representing the world in one’s own understanding” (p. 125). By using Adobe Spark to connect a text to their own lives, students are able to digitally represent their world to their peers. The intersection of students’ experiences and the experiences of characters allows for an opportunity to understand varied perspectives and representations of ideas. Additionally, using Adobe Spark gives students the opportunity to pre-record their presentation, allowing for a chance to revise the message intended for the viewer.

Implementing a variety of disciplines and texts better prepares students to become flexible readers (Holschuh & Paulson, 2013). In IRW courses, instructors are often focused on how best to provide students with transferrable skills for academia. Using educational tools that showcase the interaction of text and visuals in a multimodal presentation affords educators the opportunity to discover interaction and communication through varied contexts (Jewitt, 2014). Moreover, by using multimodal presentations, students are able to interact and communicate with peers in an engaging way (Jewitt, 2014). By creating experiences where students can use digital literacies to convey information, educators provide opportunities for students to “critique, resist, challenge, and change discourses” (Leander & Bolt, 2012, p. 33). In addition, using a platform such as Adobe Spark allows students to interact with an engaging tool in order to connect the meaning made from the text to a larger audience. Implementing varied uses of technology in an IRW course allows students to better understand the intersection of discourses and digital literacies.

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Amber Sarker is beginning her third year of doctoral coursework with Texas State University, pursuing a PhD in Developmental Education with a focus on literacy. Amber has worked in a variety of educational settings, including elementary school, undergraduate courses, online environments, museum programming, and teaching adult second language learners. She has been a member of The Education Institute for two years, which has provided opportunities to co-create professional development, revise curriculum standards, and co-author grant proposals. Amber's research interests are campus climate, postsecondary literacies, solidarity with students, and educational allyship with LGBTQ+ populations.

Carolyn Caudle is pursuing a Master's degree in Developmental Education with a focus in literacy from Texas State University. Carolyn began her career teaching kindergarten and fell in love with literacy education after watching children swell with pride when reading their first word. After taking a few years off work while her children were young, Carolyn decided to go back to college and shift her focus to literacy at the post-secondary level. She has special interest in improving students' self-efficacy and boosting confidence within reading and writing.

Developing a “Visual Rhetoric” for Students on the Spectrum

Jack Trammell
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A growing body of research, some of it connected to learning assistance, is suggesting that students on the Autism spectrum (including Asperger’s) may have a particular preference for or benefit from visual learning activities in many learning situations. This may be for very specific neurological reasons, but the practical benefits from a learning assistance perspective can very easily be explored and imagined, and present the possibility for diverse and innovative interventions.

For example, training students in group orientation sessions can be supplemented or even replaced with video lecture or online content. Students on the spectrum may focus better on a video, and be less distracted or anxious with the social component removed from the equation. Of course, if direct communication and face-to-face interaction are the primary learning objectives, that may not be as effective. But the enterprising presenter/facilitator/instructor can mix live group action and face-to-face speaking with video monitoring and prerecorded videos, or place recurring content online, and even this blended approach can sometimes mitigate a great deal of communication anxiety for spectrum-oriented students, and provide a powerful visual reference for them.

A recent study focusing on college upperclassmen looking for jobs demonstrated that a *visual rhetoric* (an overarching communication framework that focuses on visual techniques) taught through face-to-face meetings and video training could improve job interview performance for students on the spectrum (Trammell, 2013). The intervention involved students utilizing television sitcom reruns to catalog and organize body language and facial expressions seen on television. Students were later taught to *play the role* visually of an interviewee using rote cues and dialogues they had studied and

matched to specific situations. This visual approach, with an emphasis on assuming a role, resulted in much greater job interview success (Trammell, 2013; Trembath, Vivanti, Iacono, & Dissanayake, 2015).

In a similar fashion, some recent studies indicated the potential benefit of playing video games for students on the spectrum, in large part due to the visual component in combination with other kinesthetic stimulus. A self-identified *Aspie* reported that video games are not just fun, but also a safe place to play roles and transition from communications they control to real human communication that carries far greater social risk (Raede, 2016). Some studies show that the benefits of video games can benefit many children, and not just those on the spectrum (Kovess-Masfety et al., 2016).

Online tutoring also promises benefits to students on the spectrum due to its strong visual component, and its capacity for self-guided learning and pacing. Peer tutoring, as well, has shown to be effective for students in visual learning situations as early as kindergarten (Ayvazo & Ward, 2010). Learning assistance centers who train peer tutors and mentors will need to consider the potential learning benefits for students on the spectrum from including visual activities.

Drama related pedagogy is increasingly being used to help students on the spectrum learn to play roles, and assume the kinds of communication behaviors (e.g. facial expressions) that will help them adapt successfully to the mainstream (Kempe & Tissot, 2012). Although many projects have focused on younger children, the promise of the technique remains valid for postsecondary students, as demonstrated by the above interview example, which utilized a type of television-based drama/role playing.

There is some countervailing evidence that students on the spectrum may not be as visually oriented as other studies suggest (Erdodi, Lajiness-O'Neill, & Schmitt, 2013). However, many of these same studies do suggest that students on the spectrum may have better long-term recall after visual stimulus, and that visual learning may work well when blended with other neuro-inputs in patterns possibly unique to students on the spectrum. This would be consistent with blended learning techniques, and other multi-modal

pedagogies. Structured inquiry techniques, for example, have been shown to be effective (Schenning, Knight, & Spooner, 2013).

Postsecondary education and learning assistance, even with an overarching transition continuing to new pedagogies (ex. active learning) and more online or distance learning for everyone, remains primarily a visual experience. It also remains in many settings, an intense exercise in human communication skills which directly impact students on the spectrum in challenging ways. Developing a visual framework in pedagogical thinking for students on the Autism spectrum will likely prove beneficial in helping this at-risk population of postsecondary students, providing lower stress practice opportunities, and creating neuro-friendly techniques for tutoring and mentoring.

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Using Tableau Theatre in an Integrated Reading and Writing Classroom

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Tableau Theatre is an instructional method that fulfills two of the most timely needs in developmental education today: enhancing student motivation and providing engaging learning activities (Saxon, Martirosyan, Wentworth, & Boylan, 2015). As a form of highly contextualized learning, the use of total body engagement, or, what Asher (1969) referred to as *total body response* (TPR) stimulates brain activity, a prerequisite for learning (Hinton, Fischer, & Glennon, 2012; Rinne, Gregory, Yarmonlinskaya, & Hardiman, 2011; Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012), and allows space for a uniquely student-constructed response to the text as opposed to a traditional lecture-style class.

In our tableau study, students' written responses to the activity revealed that their physical involvement with the texts greatly impacted their intellectual and personal engagement evidenced by written responses. Students wrote from a position of having a personal stake in the text and used strong, persuasive language in their responses. Students also creatively reworked plots to give agency to their own characters and demonstrated increased empathy as they identified with several characters in one piece rather than taking one specific side. Several students were particularly engaged and were moved to recreate entire story endings. One did so not only by creating a novel ending, but also employed Biblical allegory in the process.

What is Tableau Theatre?

Tableau is an instructional technique in which students physically recreate *frozen statues* of a literary event from their reading. Also referred to as *freeze-frame*, the idea is to engage the student physically in the activity and to allow time and space in the curriculum for a deeper physical and mental experience of the text. In the moment of *freeze* (approximately 10 seconds), time is essentially suspended. During this time, a space is created between the in-take portion of the assignment (reading) and the output portion of the assignment (response/writing). This allows students time to experience and internalize the literary moment and to begin constructing responses based upon their personalized interpretations of the moment.

Introducing Tableau to the Class

As an instructional method that students may not be familiar with, and one which requires students to get out of their comfort zones and out from behind their desks, we recommend that several scaffolded instructional phases be used to introduce the concept progressively. We introduced this classroom activity about three to four weeks into the semester, after some classroom cohesion had occurred and we had become acquainted with the students and their work.

First, we verbally led the students through the tableau steps (detailed below) and informed them that participation was entirely voluntary. This was in accordance with our IRB consent agreement and affirms our belief as researchers that participation in research should be voluntary. This also underscored our belief as instructors that a student putting up resistance to the activity might negatively influence the free participation of others. Students were informed that if they did not wish to participate for any reason, they would be given an alternative assignment and they would not be penalized in any manner.

Next in the process of beginning the actual tableau activity, we facilitated an example that would be readily accessible and familiar to a wide audience: a job interview. We were also aware that a majority of the students in the class had actually discussed their job experiences, so we felt this was an apt example for this class in particular.

The Job Interview

We arranged a portion of the classroom to simulate the setting of a job interview. We randomly picked students to fulfill certain roles by drawing numbers, and had them occupy different spaces in the setting: the *Interviewee* sat across from a group of three *Interviewers*; the interviewers consisted of two *Little Bosses* and one *Big Boss* who stood over the shoulders of the other three. Additionally, other *Candidates* sat in a group simulating a waiting area, which was presided over by a *Secretary*. As we progressed through the activity, students switched out roles and spaces so they gained different perspectives.

The students were not required to do anything other than assume and consider the positions randomly assigned to them. At each freeze-frame, students were reminded to reflect on their position. Depending on the situation, we prompted other reflection cues as well. To create moments of action, we introduced narrative elements to which they responded such as; “you are in the middle of your interview when your cell phone rings and the ring tone is ‘take this job and shove it.’ As students heard the prompt, the instructor gave the instruction to *FREEZE* in mid reaction. The instructor then internally counted to ten (time passes very slowly in a frozen state, so this part is crucial!), and then gave the instruction *UNFREEZE* (or *relax*).

We asked students to talk about how they felt in their various positions and the scenarios we had created. We tried to keep this very lighthearted so they would feel good about the activity as we moved forward. The students were fully engaged in this activity, and the classroom atmosphere was positive and productive. The activity also helped the students relax around each other, however, we did not measure those affective aspects.

Tableau with Literature

After completing the interview tableau, including post-class reflective writing, we moved on to facilitating a tableau using scenes from texts the students read for class. We began with a short story completed as a self-contained tableau exercise, and then proceeded to a full-length novel with tableau exercises inserted intermittently. Our short story selection was “The Lottery,” written by Shirley Jackson in the 1940s and based upon a semi-dystopian society in which a yearly

lottery is drawn, and the winner, in an unexpected twist, is stoned to death. Our full-length novel was *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee. Both of these texts were well-suited for tableau as they included several scenes with engaging group dynamics as well as insight into individuals' perspectives within the groups.

When selecting scenes in which to create tableau, consider tensions, power plays, and any scene in which different characters in the scene would have differing perspectives. The idea is to help students put themselves in the shoes of someone else and consider multiple perspectives, not merely to have them get up and move around. Prompts for written responses might include references to feelings or motivations of those in the scene, asking students to consider how they would have reacted in that situation, or think about reasons the character in the scene reacted in a certain way. An example response to the prompt *Imagine yourself in the story* was

“Bill Hutchinson is the husband of Tessie Hutchinson and as I read “The Lottery” I kept thinking how this is impacting him. He may have came [*sic*] into that day thinking it was going to be him and everything would be okay as long as it was not his children or his wife.”

Indeed, the person killed was Bill Hutchinson's wife, and this student thought through some critical inferences of the literature as a result of the entire tableau exercise.

The final step in the tableau process is helping the students understand that the process of considering multiple perspectives can take place within the mind using mental imagery (Pearson, Naselaris, Holmes, & Kosslyn, 2015). Our final tableau assignment did not include tableau per se, but rather led the students through a series of imagining scenes, or, in other words, conducting tableau in their minds.

In sum, our experience shows that tableau theater activities in a developmental literacy class engage students in texts and helps their motivation to learn and connect to class concepts. Students contextualized their reading both through the interactive classroom exercise as well as empathetically with their own lived experiences.

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Introduce Learning Through Digital Games

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In 1982, Bowman expressed that teachers rarely view students in terms of students being valuable teaching resources. Tools for engaging students are powerful teaching resources, including techniques for generating student interest before instruction even begins. We suggest that capturing student insights from playing digital games is an effective means for instructors to introduce new concepts. Students begin to recognize what they don't know, and classroom discussion can then focus on these topics.

Existing research divides educational game-playing into two key themes: *making learning fun* and *learning through doing*. To make learning fun, instructors may use game-like lessons, such as quiz games based on the popular game show Jeopardy or digital demonstrations. Learning through doing may employ simulation games to make complex concepts easier to apply to practical problems (Kelly, 2005).

In contrast, an instructor may use digital games with extremely small learning curves to *introduce learning*. Students should need no prior knowledge of the curriculum to play and even to improve performance over time. As we will illustrate in the example below, the challenges they face and the strategies they use can yield the insights that an instructor can build upon.

Bowman (1982) proposed striving to emulate the ability of Pac-Man to generate a flow state, in which players become oblivious to distractions. Digital games develop a flow state by offering clear goals, immediate feedback, and an opportunity for deep but effortless involvement (Prensky, 2001; Squire, 2003). A digital game can combine a small learning curve with a natural flow state, but an instructor may need to exert some creativity to make it relevant. For example, an instructor for logistics could use Tetris to introduce

standardized packaging, pallet accumulation, and cubing-out vs. weighing-out. Finding appropriate games may require in-depth searches, but a commercial video game site can conceal a gem.

Secondary and higher education instructors often use traditional teaching methods of reading, lectures, and perhaps highly-scripted laboratory experiences (Kelly, 2005). However, instructors can foster the development of student competence and personal control over learning by interrupting endless lectures with short, dynamic activities (Bowman, 1982). Games can reach students of different learning styles (Rieber, Luke, & Smith, 1998), and students who do not usually perform well in a classroom setting can compete and participate in discussion (Kirriemuir & McFarlane, 2004).

Instructors who use digital games to introduce learning can create a context for new subject matter. Students' experiences in playing a digital game should provide simple references for complicated material. To encourage this frame of mind, an instructor may begin discussion by asking, "Why do you think I had you play this game?" Some answers are on topic; some are not. Regardless, students begin to evaluate their experiences and decipher what they may mean.

To introduce learning through digital games, an instructor should ask students to play several times and keep track of performance. The selected game is a good one if students generate insights that relate to course concepts. The following questions can establish an appropriate foundation for learning:

1. What made this game difficult?
2. What could the designers have done to make the game easier?
3. What did you do to improve over time?
4. What was the secret to success for the top performing team?

One example of how this is applied in operations management is with *Patient Shuffle*, available online through GE Healthcare (2012). In this game, students "run" hospital operations for three minutes, and performance is based on the number of patients served, as well as overall patient mood. Operations move quickly, with patients needing to visit a sequence of departments but with a limited number of doctors and nurses. Students are paired up and asked to play the game five times, keeping track of their performance.

When asked why they think they were asked them to play this game, most will say something like, “to show how hard it is to run a hospital.” However, the first question above can help them dig a little bit deeper. Why is it hard to run this hospital? Answers may refer to rapid and unpredictable arrival rate, differences in patient needs, patient preference for certain rooms, and limited resources. These responses can be the foundation for later discussions of concepts such as service scheduling, process layout, and effective capacity.

Once students recognize operational challenges, the second and third questions can lead students to begin thinking like operations managers. When evaluating how the game could be made easier, students may consider significant operational changes that can enhance effectiveness and efficiency. When such changes are not possible, students have experience developing strategies to work within the givens of an operation.

While the top performing team should be recognized, the importance of the last question lies in their secret to success. Students can learn winning strategies from each other, reflecting the concept of benchmarking. They can then apply these strategies to another round of the game, if time permits.

In conclusion, introducing learning through digital games can support a student’s need to enjoy the experience. Such activities can balance skill and challenge, while generating interest in key concepts. Students can discover gaps in their knowledge, and the instructor can help to fill in the blanks.

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Journal of College Academic Support Programs

Call for Submissions
Co-Requisite Issue, April 2018

Supported by the Texas Association for Developmental Education (TADE), the Texas Chapter of the College and Reading Learning Association (TxCRLA), and the Texas State University's Graduate Program in Developmental Education, the new Journal of College Academic Support Programs (J-CASP)—a double-masked, peer-reviewed scholarly journal relevant to Texas developmental education and learning assistance professionals—is now accepting submissions for a special issue dedicated to co-requisite models of developmental education.

Appropriate manuscripts will undergo a peer-review process by members of the J-CASP editorial board. The review process will take approximately six weeks, including two weeks for authors to address reviewer comments.

The deadline to submit for the April 2018 issue of the J-CASP will be February 1, 2018, as Texas House Bill 2223 requires statewide implementation by Fall 2018.

Submit your manuscript as a Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx, etc.) file, double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman font. Your manuscript should not exceed 6,000 words and must adhere to the APA Publication Manual (6th edition) guidelines for writing, citation, and documentation style. Please include an abstract not exceeding 250 words. The J-CASP will not consider previously published articles or manuscripts under consideration elsewhere. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all statements in their manuscript. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission for reprinting figures or quotations exceeding fair use regulations. Please submit manuscripts through our online system:
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