Have you seen the flyers around the building, announcing the new “ECCO” system from OTEL? It is a video-conferencing tool that can be used from your desktop or in the classrooms. Since it seems like something we all might use, OTEL will come give us a demonstration and lead a discussion about how we can get started with ECCO.

Mark the date on your calendar and make plans to attend a teaching discussion that has NOTHING to do with semester conversion!

Autumn Workshop—Thursday, November 10

1:30-2:30
Room 412

Bring your laptops or iPads if you want to follow along!

Congratulations to the newest members of the PAES Teaching Academy! Dr. Colette Dollarhide (Counselor Education), Dr. Terri Hessler (Special Education), Dr. Laurice Joseph (School Psychology), and Dr. Moira Konrad (Special Education) were all inducted into the PAES Teaching Academy at the autumn Back to School PAES Faculty meeting. There are now 14 PAES faculty who are members of this academy. Members have participated in a minimum of 20 PAES Instructional Enhancement Initiative events or activities.
Building Community in the Classroom

Sue Sutherland, Assistant Professor, PAES

Imagine a classroom where students and instructors are partners in the learning process; where students are not simply on the receiving end of knowledge but rather are actively engaged in knowledge construction and application; and where it is safe to make mistakes without the fear of being ridiculed and, in turn, to learn from those mistakes. In this kind of classroom learning is, “considered an act of risk taking, and the community of learners supports each individual who takes the necessary risks to learn” (Frank, 2004, p.3). Building community within the college classroom has been recognized as an effective teaching strategy (Gross Davis, 2009; Lang, 2008; Stewart, 2004) that promotes student engagement in active learning. Building community involves a willingness to provide structured opportunities for students and instructors to interact in positive ways in order to learn about each other. Below are a series of structured activities that can foster the initial development of community. I have used each of these activities with various groups of college students and have had great responses from the students. The guidelines and/or questions for the activities can be adapted to suit the content of the course you are teaching. After each activity, you should discuss what happened in the activity, what was accomplished or learned, and how can what was learned help to create a comfortable learning environment.

Human Bingo
The purpose of this activity is to provide an opportunity for mixing with and learning about others in the class. Each student gets a pre-made bingo card (figure 1 for an example) with a variety of different statements. They have to get as many different signatures on their cards as possible in the allotted time. Once the time is up ask who has the most number of different signatures, who has a row or column completed, and who has the four corners completed.

Zoom or Re-Zoom
This activity uses the picture books “Zoom” and “Re-Zoom” Istvan Banyai (1995). Each book consists of a series of pictures within a picture that transport the reader on a journey. In Zoom, the story starts with a rooster, moves to a ship, to a city, to a desert island, and to outer space. In Re-Zoom the story moves from an Egyptian hieroglyphic, to a film set, to an elephant ride, to a billboard, and to a train. As students enter the class, hand them each a picture from the Zoom or Re-zoom sequence. Make sure that the pictures you use are in sequence. Inform the students that they each hold the piece of a story and the task them to find out what the story is about by putting the pictures in sequence. They can only look at their own picture and must not show their picture to anyone else during the activity. At the end of the activity the students should line up in the order of the story. Start at one end of the line and show the pictures one at a time to see if the story is complete. The difficulty level of the activity can be decreased by allowing students to work in pairs, using a smaller sequence of pictures, or allowing more time to complete the activity. To increase the complexity of the activity use a shorter time limit, give students more than one picture each, or don’t allow students to talk during the activity.

The Big Question
Ask your students to write one question that they would like the class to answer. Once everyone has written a question on a piece of paper or note card, they find someone to ask their question to. Having introduced themselves, the students ask and answer each other’s question then switch questions and move to find another person to ask their new question to. Encourage the students to be creative with their questions to make the activity more interesting. Examples of questions could include:

- If you could be one for just 24 hours, what cereal box cartoon character would you be? Why?
- What is your favorite animal? List three adjectives to explain your choice.
- If you could have had the starring role in one film already made, which movie would you pick and why?
- If you were to perform in the circus, what would you do?

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaks more than one lan-</td>
<td>Can play the guitar</td>
<td>Took a summer class</td>
<td>Has a tattoo</td>
<td>Is a vegetarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveled this summer</td>
<td>Has a double major</td>
<td>Has the same favorite tv show as you</td>
<td>Was born in Tucson</td>
<td>Wears the same size shoe you do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has seen an eclipse</td>
<td>Has a part-time job</td>
<td>Lives within 1 mile from you</td>
<td>Rides a bike to campus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has no cavities</td>
<td>Has been to the Grand Canyon</td>
<td>Has the same favorite sport as you</td>
<td>Sings in the shower</td>
<td>Likes lima beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is from the East Coast</td>
<td>Has ever acted in a play</td>
<td>Can juggle</td>
<td>Is ambidextrous</td>
<td>Has 5 or more siblings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you were to perform in the circus, what would you do?
Building Community in the Classroom, Continued

One Sibling, Two Cars.
The purpose of this activity is to allow students to find out what they have in common with other class members. Have students get into groups of no more than four and begin to find out what they have in common. Starting at one the group is to move through the numbers getting as high as they can with things/objects/experiences they have in common. You can provide the following example to help students to understand: For example the group may discover that they all own one car, two siblings, three pets, four letters in their first name etc. Students need to make sure they have the exact number of things/objects/experiences in common. For example, if three people have one dog each and the other has two then that would not count.

Growth Circles (Frank, 2004)
The purpose of this activity is to allow students to recognize commonalities and differences in each other. Create two circles on the floor in the classroom and discuss with the students what each circle represents. When we are in the comfort zone, each of us is in a place that is safe and secure. By choosing to step out of our comfort zones to the growth zone, we are open to new ideas and experiences. Although not always comfortable, this is a place for optimum learning...what we try to avoid is going beyond the growth zone into the panic zone.

1 = Comfort Zone
2 = Growth Zone
3 = Panic Zone

Ask students a variety of questions and have them move to the circles they feel are most appropriate for that each question.

How do you feel about:
- Spiders
- Speaking in front of a large group
- Singing solo in front of a large group (this group)
- Bungee Jumping
- Camping in a tent
- Telling a family member that you love her/him?
- Heights
- Confronting a friend about something they said
- Snakes
- Taking a math test
- Introducing yourself to someone new?

You can also ask students to offer questions once they have the idea of the activity.

What Do I Need, What Can I Give?
The purpose of this activity is to have students understand what creates a safe and respectful learning environment. Ask students to write on a piece of paper what they need to feel safe and respected in this class. On a different piece of paper students should write what they can give to make others feel safe and respected in the class. Provide time for students to think and write their answers. Have the class form small groups of 4~6 students and share what they wrote on their pieces of paper. Once all have shared, combine ideas where appropriate. If there is a chalkboard or white board in the room have each group write their ideas under the headings: What Do I Need? and What Can I Give? Once all ideas are on the board, have the groups explain their ideas and combine where appropriate to form a master list. These ideas then form the norms of behavior for the class.

The Being (Frank, 2004)
The purpose of this activity is to have students understand what creates a safe and respectful learning environment. This activity is similar to What Do I Need, What Can I Give? But the use of a body outline personalizes the experience a little more for the students. Divide the class into groups of four or five and give each group a copy of a body outline. Explain to the group that on the inside of the body outline they should write or draw behaviors or qualities that are safe and respectful to self, others, and the class. On the outside of the body outline they should write or draw behaviors or qualities that damage people’s sense of respect and safety. Each group shares their bodies and discusses what they have created. At the end of the activity the class discusses and agrees on behaviors or qualities that create or damage a safe and respectful learning environment. (con’t on p. 4)
The purpose of this activity is to provide an opportunity for students to engage in spontaneity, active listening, and being put on the spot. Divide the group into pairs. Each pair creates sentences by alternating words. After practicing for a while ask the class to form a circle. Create sentences with the entire class with each person contributing one word. Then create a story by having each class member providing one sentence to the story. Designate a stage area in the class; this could be at the front or along one wall. Ask for a volunteer to provide the opening sentence for the story. The person stands at one end of the stage (stage right). Then another volunteer (standing stage left) provides the ending sentence to the story. A third volunteer (standing center stage) provides the middle sentence for the story. In turn have each person say their story as is.

Each student then inserts themselves into the story (one or two at a time) with their own sentences. Then, repeat the story as it stands each time a new person joins. Once the whole class is lined up in the stage area, recite the entire story with emotion.

For additional activities see:

http://wilderdom.com/games/


Interested in writing for the PAES Instructional Enhancement Newsletter?

We are currently seeking submissions for the winter quarter edition.

Contact Darcy (granello.1) for more details.