
Certificate of Accomplishment in Teaching Program
Workshop Reflection Assignment #3
PTP: Incorporating Instructional Technology

Part I: Describe

Title of the Workshop/Event: PTP: Incorporating Instructional Technology

Purpose Statement: The purpose of this seminar was to introduce PTP fellows to the importance of instructional technology, introduce instructional technology techniques that help with student engagement, and discuss how instructional technology can be used to address some common teaching issues.

Lead Presenter(s): Dr. Melissa Bostrom (Moderator)
Dr. Donna Pertherbridge (DELTA)
Dr. Kay Sandburg (Chemistry)
Dr. Anna Howard (Engineering)

Date(s)/Location of the Event: 12:00-2:00 PM on 11/8/2011, Tally Student Center

Approximate Number of People Who Attended the Workshop: 20

Brief Description:

This seminar was a series of presentations from each of the instructors listed above. The first presenter was Dr. Pertherbridge from DELTA (Distance Education and Learning Technology Applications) who introduced us to some of the teaching technology available for our use at NC State. Dr. Sandburg and Dr. Howard followed by presenting how they used instructional technology in their classes. Each have their own perspective and way of incorporating this technology. PTP fellows were allowed to ask questions throughout the presentations and there was additional time provided after the seminar to speak with individual presenters.

Part II: Analyze

1. Why did you choose to attend this workshop? What were you hoping to learn?

I attended this workshop first and foremost because as a PTP fellow I make every effort to attend all seminars. I have found them very beneficial to my development as a graduate student and a teacher. Furthermore, this seminar was geared toward how to incorporate technology in your teaching, a topic I am extremely interested in since I will be teaching a senior level engineering class this spring. The class I teach combines "lab" and lecture in the sense that each student has a computer and must learn how to build computer simulation models in an unfamiliar software package. In my past teaching experiences, I found that some students like to watch and try to repeat what they saw later, and others try to perform every single click and keystroke I do. Both of these methods lead to students needing to see something again. I was very interested in teaching technology that could help me capture my screen and voice on video and make these videos available for students to review. I was also interested in technology that would allow me to ask the class a question and get instant feedback from each member of the class, while doing so

somewhat painlessly. I was optimistic that I could get information about these issues and access to people with experience through this seminar.

2. What assumptions did you have before participating in this workshop?

I had been looking forward to this seminar since I saw it on the schedule at the beginning of the fall semester. I assumed that I would be introduced to many of the teaching technologies at NC State from the DELTA representative, and that I would be able to ask questions about the technologies presented. I also assumed that the professors presenting at this seminar would be excellent resources for information about teaching with technology during the seminar and possibly during the spring semester during my teaching experience. Lastly, I assumed that many of the other PTP fellows would have similar questions about teaching technology and that their question along with mine would lead to a good learning experience.

3. Were your assumptions correct or incorrect? Explain how your thinking was either supported (meaning your assumptions were validated) or how your thinking was changed (meaning your assumptions were incorrect)

This workshop was exactly what I expected and more. The presenter from DELTA introduced their website and a number of technology tools available to teachers at NC State. She introduced the Moodle website interface as well as briefly describing tools for virtual office hours such as Elluminate software. Dr. Sandburg essentially described the way she used the course website and online resources to organize her class. Her presentation detailed how she gave online quizzes, online homework, managed her online gradebook, and gave students feedback on how they were doing in the class. Dr. Howard followed with a similar presentation, but her presentation also included a detailed discussion on how to use clicker questions as a classroom assessment technique that allows her to keep track of attendance and get instant feedback on whether or not students understood a topic. I met with both of these professors individually for a few minutes after the seminar and both were happy to answer my questions and welcomed me to contact them with any future questions once my teaching semester got underway. My assumption that other PTP fellows would have similar type questions was also correct, and collectively the answers to the questions asked by the students were as valuable as the material the presenters prepared before the seminar.

4. What information was most meaningful for you? Be specific.

There was a great deal of important information presented and discussed during this seminar. The most meaningful information in this workshop was the personal experiences the professors discussed and resources for future information such as DELTA workshops and the presenting professors themselves. The information about the use of clickers was of particular interest to me since I had a few experiences using them throughout my own education and I found them very useful for gaining immediate feedback as a student. Now that I also have exposure to the teaching side of the equation, I believe clickers or some similar in-class quiz with immediate feedback can be an excellent resource for the teachers as well. Dr. Sandburg also discussed how she did not take questions over email, but rather she asked students to post their questions to forms in Moodle so all students could see the question and the answer. She also suggested that students be able to make up for missed in-class quizzes by answering other students' questions on Moodle forums and getting a little extra credit. I really like this idea as I cannot count the number of times five students emailed me with the same question. I also like giving students some leeway to make up for missed classes, given they actually know the material.

5. How do you think you will use this information? Be specific.

It is one week before my teaching semester and I have already used almost all of this information while designing my course this semester. I used Dr. Howards online syllabus as a guide when making my own, keeping in mind her advice: put everything on the syllabus and course website so that no one can say they did not know. I also modified her clicker idea slightly and created in-class quizzes in Moodle that can accomplish exactly the same goals without having the students buy clickers. In order to setup the Moodle website for the course I had to take the online workshop, which I was introduced to during this seminar. I used Dr. Sandburg's message board idea for the Moodle website and setup several forums in the format she described having success with. I have used DELTA workshops to learn about software that can capture video of what is happening on the screen along with my voice narration, and I have already used this software to create an introductory video that is currently posted on the course website. Lastly, should I need more information in the future, I have an excellent pool of resources I can go to for assistance.

6. What information do you still need to learn related to this workshop? What is your plan for learning more about this topic?

Instructional technology is always changing and advancing. NC State will probably not be using Moodle in 5 years, and no student will have to purchase a clicker because cell phones will have that capability built-in. This topic is one that, much like medicine, requires ongoing education in order to ensure students are being provided with the best possible learning environment. I plan to view DELTA workshops that focus on Elluminate- a tool that NC State provides free of cost -that allows teachers to host virtual office hours or review sessions, record them, and post the videos to the web. Perhaps some of the material that was being presented in-class can be recorded and the students can watch the videos as homework, giving them more time to build models and ask questions in class. In addition to the Elluminate workshops, I plan to use the resources provided to stay as up-to-date with instructional technology as I possibly can. I believe technology is a valuable teaching tool and ignoring it means not providing the best learning environment possible for the students.