

GASP! Get a Student Pondering

QEP & Assessment “Stuff”

Faculty perspective...

Adventures in Flipping!

By Professor Marcie Pachter

So ... you saw Mark Taylor on Development Day and liked what he had to say? And you've heard about this “flipping” thing that some of your colleagues are using in their classrooms and you are interested in trying it out? But ... you have no idea where to start or how to get there? I'd be happy to give you a “jumping off” point by sharing my own recent adventures in flipping!

First, let's start with some background. My name is Marcie Pachter, and I have been teaching Speech Communication courses for 10 years here at Palm Beach State College. I'd become increasingly frustrated with my students over the past several terms – I noticed a lack of commitment, a lot of apathy and a general shirking of responsibility. But I just couldn't put my finger on what it was that I was missing. I had always been good at connecting with students, but suddenly, I was working so much harder with less satisfying results. Then, I had the

privilege of attending two Mark Taylor sessions at a SACS conference in August 2012, where I learned about the concept of “flipping” a classroom ... and suddenly things began to make sense.

In his workshops, Taylor defined Generation Next (as he labels today's learners). He pointed out they have typically succeeded on talent, not effort; have had limited critical and/or realistic feedback; have experienced and come to expect success with little effort; and tend to overrate their skills while underrating the effort needed. Therefore, Taylor pointed out, a traditional lecture-based classroom is confusing, not engaging, and can actually create resistance. Today's student tends to avoid taking responsibility for learning, instead pushing that

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Special points of interest

Featured author

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The Critical thinking Repository: Let the “building” begin!

After a full year of planning and anticipation, we have finally begun to upload resources developed by our own faculty and staff!



We have not one, but two exciting resources underway.

First, with the help of MTIS staff on Lake Worth, Palm Beach Gardens, and Belle Glade, we now have some videos available from the February critical thinking workshop series. These videos were intended to capture the essence of the content, not necessarily the interaction of the small groups. Presenter contact information is available with links and place-

holders for those who would like to learn more about any particular workshop. More videos will be added as they become available.

Second, have you heard about POLO yet? Well you will! Panther Online Learning Objects will be formally introduced in the fall, but we'll invite you to take a sneak peek now! We are happy to be partnering with this north campus initiative that is designed to benefit the College as a whole. A collection of online resources for students in multiple courses are already available. The repository of documented strategies to teach and assess critical thinking strategies will be kept as a digital collection within POLO.

Faculty and staff on the QEP team will be starting the collection with their additions, but there will always be room for

more! Very soon, College faculty and staff may submit strategies that may be appropriate for the repository. Submission information will soon be available on the POLO and QEP web pages.

Eventually, we will have a rich inventory of resources to teach and assess critical thinking in all programs offered at Palm Beach State. For now, we hope you'll enjoy this early phase as you preview the work of your colleagues.

Click here to view the critical thinking [workshop videos](#).

Click here to preview [POLO](#).

QEP begins to wrap up first full year of implementation

Hard to believe we haven't always done this, but we're actually just finishing our first full “official” year of QEP implementation! We announced the need in 2009, developed the plan in 2010-2011, and spent 2011-2012 making preparations. This year, we spent time aligning learning outcomes in every program, ensuring that all programs have at least one outcome that is associated with critical thinking. We began to develop our own critical thinking workshop series, and successfully delivered 18 presentations College-wide.

We revised and implemented a “QEP rubric” to

measure critical thinking during the fall Gen Ed assessment cycle. Additionally, some members of the QEP Advisory Council adapted the rubric for classroom use.

On April 5th, members of the QEP team will meet together for a full day of work that will include reflecting on the challenges and successes of this first year and to plan next year's activities.

Let us know if you are interested in being involved next year!

Contact Karen Pain: paink@palmbeachstate.edu

A word from the Gen Ed committee...

A review of Facione's *Comparative Reasoning: "This is like that" Thinking*

by Connie Tuisku and Professor Warren Smith

Teaching is more challenging in the 21st-century because our students expect us to deliver to them the whole enchilada—in other words, the entire content of the text book. They are unwilling or unable to read



for comprehension, analysis or discussion. There is one tool, however, comparative reasoning, that teachers can utilize that might assist their students in retaining content information—i.e. by comparing

old or familiar knowledge to something new or unfamiliar. Students learn better when they are able to relate it to their “world”.

Comparative reasoning is a methodology which can stimulate and advance more critical thinking for our students. So, what is comparative reasoning? In a nutshell, it helps us to interpret, explain or infer from something which is less familiar by comparing it to that which is more familiar. Facione says, “this is like that” thinking.

Facione expresses that effective comparative reasoning relies on images such as models, metaphors etc. The comparative reasoning process can assist us in illustrating ideas and making arguments. We find comparative reasoning is used very effectively by lawyers when making arguments by comparing cases. It is also used in discussing ethics and making public policy arguments, e.g. pertaining to human beings and human stem cells. CEOs use comparative reasoning when trying to persuade others about business deals. Art critics can use comparative reasoning when analyzing an art object with a physics theory. English Composition or Humanities students may be assigned a comparative essay such as comparing a known principle with one less familiar, e.g. using a model for health care delivery that analogizes the delivery services in a successful restaurant chain like the Cheesecake Factory. (See example in [New Yorker magazine article](#)). Comparative reasoning is a great



Several faculty and staff who served on the General Education Assessment and QEP committees in the fall of 2012 participated in a survey of a book by Dr. Peter Facione called “Think Critically” (Prentice Hall, 2011). Some participants also selected chapters to review and share with others. Connie Tuisku and Warren Smith worked together to offer

this summary of Facione’s perspective on comparative reasoning. Pearson offers a free companion website for this book and others in the “Think” series. Visit: <http://thethinkspot.com/>.

tool particularly for explaining abstract concepts.

Facione points out that while comparative reasoning can be potentially valuable, helping us understand something unfamiliar in terms of something familiar, we must evaluate the congruence between the two objects that we are comparing. He states that the more persuasive the essential similarities are, the more relevant the comparison.

Facione provides five criteria for evaluating comparative reasoning:

Familiar—for a successful comparative reasoning process, use examples that your students can understand and relate to

Simple—use examples that are easy to understand which will help students comprehend the concepts

Comprehensive—the comparisons that you are making should capture as many essential features as possible

Productivity—comparisons suggest consequences that go beyond those mentioned in the initial comparison—for instance, a productive comparison can suggest something that is both unexpected and troubling

Testable—you must be able to use your comparisons to determine if there is any false or unacceptable components of your reasoning

Adventures in Flipping!

Professor Marcie Pachter (continued from cover)

expectation that they will learn to the faculty member. A flipped classroom changes this expectation by shifting responsibility for learning back to the learner, or, as Taylor said, “taking the content out of the classroom.”

In defining the flipped classroom, the University of Northern Colorado said, “Class time is spent on inquiry-based learning which would include what would traditionally be viewed as a student’s homework assignment. Teachers should be viewed as facilitators of learning rather than vessels of knowledge.” Knewton, maker of an online adaptive learning platform, explained that we cease to be the “sage on the stage” and instead become a “guide on the side.” In other words, we cease to lecture; we focus on facilitating and assisting students in their own exploration of content.

There are countless ways to move student consumption of content outside of the classroom. Technology can play a significant role – you can record videos, send Power Points with audio commentary from you, or send web links, online readings and links to relevant videos, to name a few. However, as Mark Frydenberg, senior lecturer at Bentley University, pointed out in a *Huffington Post* article, we need to be cognizant of the “digital divide” and make sure that all of our students are able to access this technology outside of our classrooms. You can

also use more traditional methods of accessing content. For example, for many assignments, I have students read a chapter from the textbook and answer questions on the content.

In his explanation of the flipped classroom, Taylor stressed the importance of making students responsible for this content. He stated that students need to come in prepared for class and, in fact, he recommended that at least 25 percent of their course grade be determined by this preparation. How do you grade preparation? You can do it in a variety of ways. You might have students answer questions in writing before coming in, give a quiz at the start of class, or have students briefly summarize their learning to a partner or group. But the fact is: in a flipped classroom, a student must be prepared for class.

So what if a student is not prepared? What if they don’t do the assigned work? Taylor pointed out that this student cannot be successful that day in class, which needs to be communicated to the student. I have students who have not completed their work sit in the back to complete it. They can earn back half of the preparation points and half of the participation points given that day in class once they are done and “ready.” I don’t present this as punitive. From the first day, I remind them that my job is to facilitate their success – and I therefore will always

“Imagine a classroom where all of your students have already been exposed to and have a basic understanding of that day’s content...what would you do with your class time if your only goal was to deepen that understanding and increase their engagement with the content?”

promote behavior that best prepares them for class. After just a few classes, students that haven’t completed the work will simply tell me at the start of class and go get it done. Especially if they see the value in having that work completed play out in class activities, most students quickly come on board.

Imagine a classroom where all of your students have already been exposed to and have a basic understanding of that day’s content ... what would you do with your class time if your only goal was to deepen that understanding and increase their engagement with the content? Small groups and dyads can review homework together, complete an in-class activity or do a practical exercise. Frydenberg said, “In my

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flipped classroom, after an occasional quiz, students form small groups, and alternate roles of doer, reader, and checker as they make their way through an in-class, hands-on exercise. I roam around to see how they are doing, answering questions, and noting interesting problems or solutions for groups to share at the debriefing during the last 15 minutes of class.” My speech classes might have a spirited discussion about the topic, report back on an out-of-class assignment based on their reading, engage in small group role-playing or work in dyads to develop and work on a graded assignment.

So ... there I was at the start of this academic year: frustrated with my students, not understanding how what I had always done had ceased to work. As my second semester of flipping draws to a close, I can honestly say that frustration has greatly decreased. I see a much higher level of engagement – and, more importantly, responsibility – from many of my students. Do I get through to all of them? Of course not. Is it easy? Nothing new ever is. Is it worth the extra time spent developing new materials and activities? Yes – the payback in class is priceless when I see students become not just engaged ... but excited about what they are learning and how they are learning it. As one student said to me a few weeks into the term, “You know, this just makes sense.”

Do some research on your own and think about it: is it time for you to “flip out”?

“...here I was at the start of this academic year : frustrated with my students, not understanding how what I had always done had ceased to work. As my second semester of flipping draws to a close, I can honestly say that frustration has greatly decreased. “

Meet Professor Marcie Pachter

A professor at Palm Beach State since 2002, Marcie Pachter teaches speech and mass communications courses on the Lake Worth campus. She has been an asset to both the QEP and Gen Ed Assessment committees since 2010. Prior to her involvement on these teams, she served as an advisor for Phi Theta Kappa.



Professor Pachter is kept busy at home—a place where she enjoys life with husband Seth and her two daughters, Morgan and Miranda, and where she recently allowed buckets of worms to be nurtured for months (yes inside, and don’t judge—it was a science project!).

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WANT TO LEARN MORE?



Suggested reading:

1. Frydenberg, M. (2012). The flipped classroom: It’s got to be done right. *The Huffington Post*. Available at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-frydenberg/the-flipped-classroom-its_b_2300988.html?utm_hp_ref=email_share
2. Overmyer, J. (2013). The flipped classroom. *Mathematics and Teaching Institute at University of Northern Colorado*. Available at <http://www.flippedclassroom.com/index.php>
3. Taylor, M. (2012). *Meet Generation Next*. Available at www.taylorprograms.com
4. The flipped classroom: Turning traditional education on its head. (2012). Available at <http://www.knewton.com/flipped-classroom/>

*About **GASP!***

Palm Beach State College

The idea behind *GASP!* is pretty simple. We all want students to think! As faculty and staff, we appreciate ideas that will make it easier for us get students thinking, and we want to better understand how assessment can help us know we're on the right track. *GASP!* may come in the form of a single fact sheet, a newsletter, or sometimes perhaps, something more journalistic.

The QEP and General Education Assessment Committees want to use *GASP!* as a platform to

- feature faculty and staff who have or are using strategies that help students demonstrate achievement of any of our general education learning outcomes, including critical thinking;
- update readers on important issues related to assessment, accreditation, or the QEP;
- promote College events related to critical thinking, assessment, or professional learning opportunities for faculty or staff that will lead to improved student learning.

So what do you think? Have an idea? We're listening!

Please contact us if you have something to share!

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Helen Shub: shubh@palmbeachstate.edu

Who's Who?

Assessment Chair: Helen Shub

QEP Chair: Karen Pain

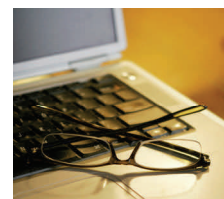
2012-2013 Committee Members

Assessment	QEP Implementation
Jennifer Campbell	Kimberly Allen
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Robin Fiedler	Carleton Chernenkoff
Robin Hoggins-Blake*	Lyam Christopher
David Knopp	Brian Findley
Marcie Pachter	Manuel Larenas
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Ana Porro	Richard Reeder
Debra-Anne Singleton	Kristy Taylor
Warren Smith	David Wells
Melissa Stonecipher	Elizabeth Wilber
Patrick Tierney	Mindy Yale
Connie Tuisku	

VISIT US ONLINE!

<http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/qep>

<http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/learningoutcomes/>



**We are deeply saddened by the recent loss of Dr. Robin Hoggins-Blake. She was a cherished colleague and friend.*

