

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY TO CHALLENGE WELL-KNOWN CONCERNS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

COMMON STUDENT PROBLEMS*	HOW WE ADDRESS THESE PROBLEMS (TRANSFORMATION OF THE PROBLEM)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete or transitional learners • Epistemological dualists • Poor-principled ethical reasoning 	<p style="text-align: center;">MOVE STUDENTS TO CONTEXTUALIZED LEARNING[†]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptually oriented required readings • Require essay exams (and outlines for each exam question) • No “in-class” quizzes or tests • No “edutainment” • Socratic dialogue • Introduce students to many different ideas and perspectives • Opportunities for students to think about an idea without “owning” it • Introduce students to the history and philosophy of science • Emphasize human development and transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No active engagement • Do not understand the learning process 	<p style="text-align: center;">EMPHASIZE PROACTIVE BEHAVIOR: LEARNING HOW TO LEARN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socratic dialogue (NOT discussion); will not “cover” the material • Contract required between student and professor • No questions, and the Exam becomes due • Grade and approve readings, class session notes, and essay outlines • Timely constructive criticism of students’ work • Opportunity to grade oneself against the <i>10 Criteria</i> • Extensive office hours available (and utilized) • Samples of successful students’ work available • Samples of our own work available (papers, notes, readings) • Contracts with former students available • Lists of extensive resources on reserve in the College Library and on-line
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability / Dependability 	<p style="text-align: center;">MANY OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No attendance / roll taken; adult responsibility assumed • All expectations, defined outcomes, and opportunities outlined in the <i>Educational Contract</i> and <i>Course Syllabus</i>

* Gardiner, Lion F. (1998). 'Why We Must Change: The research evidence.' *The NEA Higher Education Journal*. Pp.71-88.

* Gardiner, L. (1994). *Redesigning Higher Education: Producing Dramatic Gains in Student Learning*. Washington, D.C.: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University.

[†] Magolda, Marcia B. Baxter (1992). *Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender related patterns in students' intellectual development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS**	HOW WE CHALLENGE THESE PROBLEMS IN OUR COURSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosely organized • Unfocused curriculum • Undefined outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Syllabus provides <i>Exam Questions</i> and <i>Schedules</i> for the entire semester • Educational Contract defines all expectations, opportunities, and outcomes • Teaching Philosophy refers students to a bibliography of work that has influenced our teaching • Lists of extensive resources on reserve in the College Library and on-line
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on passive learning • Lectures that transmit low-level information • Low expectations of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socratic dialogue; will not “cover” the material (<i>guidance</i> instead of prescription) • Class Syllabus, Teaching Philosophy, and Educational Contract available in Library and on professor’s website • No questions, and the Exam becomes due • Grade and approve readings, class session notes, and essay outlines • Offer timely feedback on students’ work • Extensive office hours available (and utilized) • <i>10 Criteria</i> grading standard • Samples of successful students’ work available • Samples of our own work available (papers, notes, readings) • Contracts with former students available • Opportunity to improve final course grade^{††} • Encourage students to experience frustration and confusion • Interaction with the <i>Academic Achievement Center</i> (tutoring services) • Lists of extensive resources on reserve in the College Library and on-line
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments of learning that do not measure comprehension, analysis, or critical thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay exam questions including outlines for each (and every) exam question, graphic presentations, and an essay per each exam. • Grading based on the <i>10 Criteria</i>^{†††} • Extensive office hours available • Socratic dialogue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted student-teacher interaction in and outside of class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms/offices are <i>safe</i> places to learn and explore ideas • Extensive office hours available (and utilized) • Grade and approve readings, class session notes, and essay outlines • Offer timely constructive criticism of students’ work

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†† *Improvement of Grade Option*: Students with at least a ‘C’ average prior to the Final Exam (or on the basis of re-negotiation of the Educational Contract) retain the possibility of earning a ‘B’ or ‘A’ as a Final Course Grade, depending on their performance on the Final Examination. Example – Exam #1 (worth 250 points) = 188 (letter grade ‘C’), Exam #2 (worth 250 points) = 197 (course grade ‘C’), Final Exam (worth 400 points) = 360 (letter grade ‘A’); Total points = 745. In the instance, the final (letter) course grade would be, ‘A’.

††† We do have preliminary assessments using Bloom’s Taxonomy of our performance requirements, including our essays and our grading.