Feb 6th, 1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

Credits Earned, Credits Due: Forging New Degree Completion Pathways for Post-Traditional Students with the Aid of Prior Learning Assessment Portfolios

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Title: Credits Earned, Credits Due: Forging New Degree Completion Pathways for Post-Traditional Students with the Aid of Prior Learning Assessment Portfolios

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Greg Oakes, PhD, Asst. Dean CAS
Winthrop University
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Learning Theory (1): Pedagogy

Roots of Pedagogy

• Literal meaning = teaching of children
• Derived from the Greek words for “child” and “leading”,
• Arose from 12th century teaching approaches
• Mandatory schooling in Europe and later the US.
• Currently the dominant teaching approach

“I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say.”
Learning Theory (2) - Constructivism

Rise of Constructivism/Humanism

- Behaviorism to Constructivism - Retention Best When It is:
  - Learner-Focused
  - Cooperative and Participative
  - Co-created or negotiated
  - Anchored
- And Involves:
  - Higher-order thinking
  - Immersion in a specific / distinct context
  - Engagement
  - Use of multiple senses
Andragogy

• Term was first used by a German educator named Dr. Alexander Kapp in 1833.
• Literal Meaning = Teaching of Adults
• (Re) Appearance of Andragogy (Knowles)
• Controversies
• No Perfect Agreement
• Compromise
Learning Theory (4) – Pedagogy Vs. Andragogy

**Pedagogy**
- Teacher-focused
- Outcomes-based
- Content-oriented
- Lecturing
- Grading
- Instructing (Students)

**Andragogy**
- Learner-oriented
- Experiential
- Problem-centered
- Facilitation
- Self-evaluation
- Guiding (Learners)
## Knowles’ Andragogical Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions</th>
<th>Design Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-concept ➔</td>
<td>Increasingly self-directedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience ➔</td>
<td>Source for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness ➔</td>
<td>Tasks of Social Roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-View ➔</td>
<td>Immediate application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation ➔</td>
<td>Problem-Centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation ➔</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Climate ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respectful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanism For Mutual Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual Self-diagnosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objectives ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual Negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sequenced In Terms Of Readiness – Problem Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiential Techniques (Inquiry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual Re-diagnosis Of Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual Measurement Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adult Learning Concepts

**Adults**

- Want to know why they should learn.
- Motivated to put time and energy into learning if they know the benefits.
- Need to take responsibility and be in charge of their own lives.
- Bring experience to learning.
- Are ready to learn when the need arises.
- Learn when they choose to learn and commit to learn.
- Are task-oriented (while education is subject-centered).
# Portfolio Learning Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio / e-Portfolio:</th>
<th>Is a collection of material designed and compiled with a specific, such as video or audio recordings, artefacts or photographs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offers a clear view of accomplishments, skills and specific knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presents and tracks accomplishments in and outside the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides direct evidence of the quality of a student's work and a basis for evaluation of work-in-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Portfolio:</td>
<td>Provides appropriate evidence of learning and achievement, Evidence often has been presented to another person for review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contain written reflective statements, for example about teaching-as-research, diversity, and learning community;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allows assessment to be a process, rather than necessarily as &quot;final“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permits re-evaluation by alternative evaluators, at different times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Situation:</strong></td>
<td>Responsibilities, work schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education level:</strong></td>
<td>Length of Absence in formal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial:</strong></td>
<td>Self-funding vs. employer supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical skills:</strong></td>
<td>Computing: LMS, Social networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons for Studying:</strong></td>
<td>Intrinsic or Extrinsic Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Knowledge:</strong></td>
<td>Veterans, Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Situation:</strong></td>
<td>Technical environment, Competency etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Hands-on Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group of 2 or 3</th>
<th>1. Most exotic/interesting place in the US you have ever visited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Most exotic/interesting place outside the US you have ever visited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Most exotic/interesting place outside the US you have ever wish to visit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE NEED TO LEVERAGE PRIOR LEARNING TO ENSURE TIMELY GRADUATION OF POST-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS
Educational Demand

- 1973: 28% of workforce have post-secondary education*
- 2010: 59%
- 2020: 65%, estimated
- Note that STEM, Healthcare, and Community Services among the fast-growing sectors, require more post-secondary education.

* including associates degrees and training programs

(Carnevale et al, 2013)

Source: Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce analysis
Note: Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.
2011: Obama Administration calls on CHEA to identify steps to increase college completions: “by every important measurement we have, college graduates fare better individually than those who lack a degree.” (Gee et al, 2013/US Census)
## A Degree Attainment Shortfall

### The Attainment Gap

- Projected 2025 U.S. population, ages 25 to 64: 171,837,000
- Total credentials needed to reach 60%: 103,102,000
- Current degrees (two- and four-year) still in workforce in 2025: 37,122,000
- Degrees by 2025 from immigration of college graduates: 4,417,000

### New credentials needed by 2025

- Degrees produced by 2025 at current rates: 61,564,000
- Additional credentials needed: 38,288,000

Source: "Lumina Foundation Strategic Plan 2013-16",
Prior Learning Assessment: speeding the process

In a study of 48 institutions, adult students with credit earned through PLA were two-and-a-half times more likely to complete a degree compared to adult students without such credit. (Klein-Collins & Wertheim 2013)

![Figure 32. Degree Completion by PLA Credit-Earning for All Students](image)
Saving Time and Money

1-6 PLA credits: average 2.5 months savings; 3 Credits @$590 per hour: $1770
7-12 PLA credits: average 3.5 months savings; 9 Credits @$590 per hour: $5310

(Klein-Collins, 2010)
Our Post-Traditional Students

Who are our students?
Resource Center for Adult Students
Winthrop University

- Undergraduate Post-Traditional enrollee (Age 25 - 59): 336
- Of those students, 50 are identified as Student Veterans
- 41 students began at Winthrop as freshmen
- 275 transferred to Winthrop
- 146 students have a permanent address in Rock Hill
- 17 students are living on-campus

Popular Majors:
- Business Administration
- Psychology
- Education
- Biology
- Human Nutrition

- Average Age: 32
- Median Age: 29
- 95 students transferred to Winthrop
- 12 students transferred by a current Post-Traditional Student
- 1981 enrollment at Winthrop

Unofficial data from Spring 2015
PLA STANDARDS AND APPROACHES
CAEL PLA Standards

- Council on Adult Experiential Learning – since 1974
- Among their 10 standards:

  - Credit or its equivalent should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience.
  - Assessment should be treated as an integral part of learning, not separate from it, and should be based on an understanding of learning processes.
  - The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic or credentialing experts.
  - If awards are for credit, transcript entries should clearly describe what learning is being recognized and should be monitored to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning.
  - Fees charged for assessment should be based on the services performed in the process and not determined by the amount of credit awarded.

http://www.cael.org/pla.htm
Standard Procedures

- Advisement, preliminary determination of eligibility
- General review of experience, skills, their fit with PLA offerings
  - E.g., Thomas Edison U, PLA100:
  - All full or part-time jobs you have had
  - All independent reading and study you have done
  - All training programs or in-service courses you have completed
  - All volunteer work you have done
  - Your cultural and artistic pursuits
  - Your hobbies and recreational pastimes
  - All community or religious activities you are involved in
  - All military service you have completed
  - Any travel study you have completed
  - Your organizational memberships
- Enrollment in PLA portfolio construction course
Several PLA variables

- Types of PLA portfolio preparation process
  - Course/no course
  - Self-guided/instructor guided
  - Cohort/individual

- Types of PLA credit
  - Competency (billing practices, web design) + credit level (lower division; upper; grad)
  - Subject area (accounting, writing, cell biology, etc.)
  - Specific course SLO (WRIT101, PHIL340)
Some portfolio commonalities

■ What counts
  - Work experience: industry, commerce, professions, skills
  - Training processes: certifications, examinations
  - Life experiences: volunteer work, community activity

■ Narratives + support documentation
  - Some include: education review, autobiography, testimonials

■ Citing Authorities – Bloom, Kolb, e.g.

■ Learning demonstration: Principles + their application

■ Controls and limits:
  - Maximum credit-earned/subject area – e.g., 12 hrs
  - Faculty review of portfolio
  - Notarized honesty pledges
EXPLORATION OF PLA AS A PATHWAY TO STRENGTHEN ADULT DEGREE COMPLETION AT WINTHROP
Winthrop Strengths

- Student-focused educational environment
- Close student-faculty interaction
- Peer learning environments
- Well-defined Student Learning Outcomes at course and program level
- Self-conscious peda andragogy
- Student research a central focus
- Critical Thinking - reading, argumentative writing central to general education
- Human Experience central to general education
Winthrop PLA – some thoughts

- Student-focused educational environment
- Close student-faculty interaction
- Peer learning environments
- Well-defined Student Learning Outcomes at course and program level
- Self-conscious peda andragogy
- Student research a central focus
- Critical Thinking - reading, argumentative writing central to general education
- Human Experience central to general education
- Guided PLA portfolio development
- PLA portfolio cohorts
- PLA aligned with specific course offerings
- PLA portfolio as research document:
  - What is learning
  - Principle + application specifics
  - An argumentative case study
- Who/What am I as a result of my life experience?
References (Slides 1-11)


References (slides 12-26)