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Pedagogy and Wellness in the Classroom Portfolio Artifact

Project: Integrating Metacognitive Skills and Inclusive Communication Practice into Existing Curriculum for Student Wellness

Collaborative Personal Film Critique and Analysis Assignment

After screening a relevant film for the course, students will write a short online review of the film based on the critique method D.A.I.J. (Description Analysis Interpretation Judgement). The presentation of the D.A.I.J. critique method will include specific instructions for using metacognitive strategies to investigate one's own reaction to the film.

During class students will engage in Think, Pair, Share exercises where they will first share the initial responses they wrote in the online discussion with their partner, and then look for congruencies and/or contradictions between their partner's and their own responses. Each student will take a couple minutes to develop a personal explanation for that congruency and/or contradiction, and then bring those theories into a conversation with a new partner.

In the second Think, Pair, Share grouping, each student will listen closely to the theory their partner developed from the first meeting, and how they came to that understanding based on the comparisons that were made between their first group's initial reflections.

Lastly, each student will share, not their own, but their partner's theory and explanation with the class.

RATIONALE

This section outlines my intention behind the reapplication of strategies found in the EPICC model of pedagogy from the Pedagogy and Wellness Micro-credential course into the assignment outlined above. My attempts to make one-to-one relationships between each point of strategy in this updated assignment and specific goals in EPICC

are frustrated by the multitude aspects from the EPICC model that influenced this curriculum update. This rationale is informed by strategies of Engagement, Purpose, Inclusivity, Compassionate Teaching, and Connection including: flipped classroom, growth mindset, metacognitive strategies, challenge,

Metacognitive skills and inclusivity as support for student wellness

The development of metacognition integrated into this assignment is intended to support a growth mindset specifically concerning the experience of film viewership and evaluation, and more generally with an improved understanding of self and personal experience. These metacognitive skills translate directly to improved wellness through the increased knowledge of self and knowledge of mind.

The development of inclusivity in the culture of the classroom through student intellectual collaboration is intended to support in participants the felt sense of belonging and personal value to the group. A sense of belonging to the classroom community supports attitudes of wellness by invoking a sense of responsibility for, and value to, the other people in the community.

Metacognition in the evaluative “D.A.I.J.” method of art critique

The evaluative method of artworks through *Description, Analysis, Interpretation, and Judgment (D.A.I.J.)* is often taught as a model of structuring the academic product (*paper, talk, review, critique*). However, with a minor adjustment and reorientation of attention to the activity of the mind, it can be a powerful teaching tool for personal insight and metacognitive skills practice.

Commonly, judgment is expressed first when openly reacting to art experiences. For example, “it was a good movie” or “bad movie”. Possibly, “I liked it” or “didn’t like it”. Or, using judgmental adjectives: it was “cool”, “scary”, “sad”, “stupid”, etc.

Judgement is often expressed first simply because we are conditioned to express our reactions and not the conditions for them. In addition, the thoughts and feelings that condition our reactions are often clouded by the intensity of emotion or conviction accompanying the reaction itself. Simply put, we are often ignorant to the *descriptions, analyses, and interpretations that condition our judgements*. Some insight into our own experience is always necessary to reorient our critique into the D.A.I.J. order.

So, in teaching this critique method, a metacognitive strategy can be offered to students which allows awareness of the judgment, rather than simply reacting to it. Reordering the steps to J.D.A.I. reflects the more common cognitive experience of evaluation. This can reorient the student to their own experience of the art invoking metacognitive insight.

By recognizing that your own mind likely rushes to judgment during and after experience, one can create a natural pause. By accepting and allowing the judgment, and then looking backwards to identify the aesthetic elements in the artwork that precipitated those feelings or reactions, one can build an expression that starts at description, then moves through analysis to interpretation as valuable support for a concluding judgment.

Practicing critique methods like this, with one respectful eye on how your own mind and heart are reacting to artwork, you can build skill investigating your own state of mind in all aspects of academic life, and in broader life experience as well.

Although this method is applied specifically to the phenomenology of art experience, it is underpinned by the practice of insight and understanding of self — *a metacognitive cornerstone of wellness*.

The Critique Method D.A.I.J. was developed by Edmund Burke Feldman in three books:

- *Feldman, E. B. (1967). Art as Image and Idea. Prentice-Hall.*
- *Feldman, E. B. (1970). Becoming Human Through Art: Aesthetic Experience in the School. Prentice-Hall.*
- *Feldman, E. B. (1972). Varieties of Visual Experience: Art as Image and Idea. Harry N. Abrams.*

Inclusivity and belonging in the collaborative evaluation of art

An assignment asking for a public response to a text in an online discussion board is a common academic evaluation tool. From my experience teaching, student written responses with each other as their audience contain more sincere enthusiasm and demonstration of intelligence than responding to only the instructor as the audience. This raises questions about the differences in the relationships students have with each other than with their instructor.

The act of sharing your informed preferences about artwork is an act of vulnerability. Similar to making art, in sharing your preference, you are opening yourself to judgment

by revealing an aspect of your identity. Furthermore, in an academic setting, your preferences are already destabilized by your own investigation. Consciously or not, it is an act of bravery in its risk of public identity, similar to posting important life events on social media. Students have differing amounts of this emotional risk taking in their skillsets on entering any course. Inclusive teaching strategy (*also compassionate teaching*) needs to make emotional space for a range of identified belonging and risk, so that all students feel included in this exercise at their level.

Starting with the individualized metacognitive strategy of J.D.A.I. is meant to prime each student for entering the emotional obstacle course of the multiple Think, Pair, Share (TPS) collaborations they engage with in the second of the assignment. The two conversations students have in this section isolate different communication skills meant to build support and trust in one's own belonging and in peer intellect.

In the first TPS conversation, students will directly collaborate with their partner to analyze and develop a theory of reactivity (why they felt the same or different). This requires negotiating with peer reactions to the same material and directly comparing their own response to another's. In the second TPS conversation, students will need to trust the listening skill of their partner and themselves. In the report to the whole class, each student will need to contend with the pressure of class presentation and the responsibility of representing another's ideas with some accuracy. This final process will undoubtedly cause a comparison of their own thinking to the concepts expressed by everyone else and growth in their relationship to the whole group.

Evaluation

- Assessment of the initial written responses employing the J.D.A.I. method of metacognitive critique of art experience
- Assessment of the final shared narratives of their peer's theories for connection and contradiction between student responses.

Wellness goals from the unit on Stress and Emotion:

- Reinvigorate and sustain my meditation practice, exercise routine, and collage art making practice.

EPICC Strategies already employed	EPICC Strategies w/ intention to use
ENGAGEMENT	
Discussion boards	Shift activities more often during class
Think, pair, share	Offer multiple versions of assignments
In class exercise (challenge)	Flipped classroom content and processing
Explicitly link assignments to course objectives	Encourage study groups outside of class
Regular low-stakes quizzes and assignments	
Planned meetings with faculty for scaffolded assignments	
Student presentations	
PRIORITIZING PURPOSE	
Treasure hunts	Leverage outside interests
Encourage student attendance at other lectures	Lecture on current events
Guest speakers	Connect material to life goals
Test questions and discussion topics with relevance	
Role play practicing relevant skills	
INCLUSIVITY	
Incorporate anti-bigotry content	Signal belonging with words "In this class we..."
Include multiple perspectives	Ensure students resources they need, including metacognitive wellness strategies
Use student's preferred pronouns	Present in multiple perceptual formats
Model respect for multiple perspectives	Use CU resources to endure accessibility
Clear expectations with flexibility	Address tough in-class moments with non-violent communication
Provide clarity on syllabus for class policies and fairness	Share an observation ("I noticed that you made a broad derogatory statement")
Adopt a growth mindset	Express a feeling ("I feel uncomfortable with that)
Multiple ways to demonstrate learning	Connect feeling to a need ("...because I need this classroom to be a safe space where all students know they are seen and heard and respected)

EPICC Strategies already employed

Small low-stakes exercises reliably scheduled

EPICC Strategies w/ intention to use

Make a request (I would like to request that we refrain from making discriminatory statements about people both in and out of this classroom)

COMPASSION

Know how to respond to student disclosures of trauma

Openly discuss wellness related topics

Maintain compassionate boundaries

Encourage communication

Provide manageable tasks that increase in difficulty

Convey intention to help openly

Normalize failure as a part of learning

Reach out faster to students who are falling behind

Celebrate the attempt

Structure assignments in a way that minimizes procrastination

CONNECTION

Encourage visits to office hours

Ice breakers at the beginning and end of semester

Tell stories

Learn students names and pronouns and use them correctly

Devote class time to meeting in smaller groups

Use first name/nickname in class

Group online annotation of a text or video

Think, pair, share, exercises

Move students around to work with other classmates more

GROWTH MINDSET

Inspire belief that material can be learned

Spend time introducing metacognitive strategies

Teach students metacognitive strategies: D.A.I.J.

Ask for recall of other challenges overcome

Be open about your own challenges

Talk about brain plasticity

Talk about "attribution", the idea that when we attribute our failures to uncontrollable factors, it becomes harder to focus on what we can control and change for future success.

Communication strategies already used	Communication strategies w/ intention to use
Empowerment - helpful with insecure students	Ask direct questions even about difficult subjects like abuse and harm - helpful with students in repressed distress
Compassion - helpful always	Notice and allow my own reactions - strengthens the communication
Pause for metacognition (check yourself) - helpful when I feel emotional	Reflect back - supports metacognition
Model creative problem solving - always helpful	Partner on next steps - moral support
Listen with openness even when it involves:	Feedback forms - in bigger classes
Criticism	Comment box - in bigger classes
Big Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In communication with students developing and becoming more attached to the plan they are making for a creative work, I tend to challenge their creative process in hopes of releasing some of the restrictions built by the attachment - it works half the time, the other half causing defensiveness and retreat from the communication. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I intent to use the LARA method of managing tense talks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Listen, Affirm, Respond, Ask</i>
Health Concerns	
Invite disclosure non-judgmentally - with obviously emotional students	
Validate concern - always helpful	
Use active listening	
Reassure that there is help available here	
Communicate sincere concern	
Recommend services	
Suggest a followup plan	
Challenge to creative process	