

Discussion Protocols and Dialogic Practices Activity

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Discussion Protocol 1: Open Space (Sport Sciences)

Students get to create groups based on topics that are important to them in their field of specialization (e.g., Exercise Science, Movement Science, Social Science)

Implementation:

The goal for my classes will be to encourage interest in student led research as a way of empowering lifelong learners and contributors to the scientific community.

Open space allows for student autonomy and self-determination of interests that homes in on their field of specialization while encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration. Moreover, it encourages students to be imaginative and think creatively about how they would construct methodology to develop their research interests.

One pitfall is the potential for the different specializations to silo within themselves. Therefore, assignments need to be grounded around the athlete and remind Sport Science students that their specializations are an applied science.

Discussion Protocol 2: Four A's

Students will meet to discuss one's Assumptions, Agreements, Arguments, and Adaptations (initially aspire) from a text.

Implementation:

For students to be able to understand scientific literature, it is important for them to be able to interpret and critique the information provided. The Four A's are not simply individual tasks, but directions for critical thinking that encourage co-learning between students.

Students will confront their biases about the topic in the form of Assumptions, to which they can discuss what they agree or might want to argue over. Afterwards, students will adapt their understanding of the topic.

The argument portion of the Four A's may encourage debate rather than a discussion and dialogue. However, the goal is not to argue with one another but to understand where these arguments are coming from.

Discussion Protocol 3: Consultancy Protocol

Students gather to present and discuss a dilemma within their topic of research. Because of the praxis of the applied sciences, students are encouraged to work from outward in (i.e., discuss external validity before internal validity).

Implementation:

Often Sport Sciences can be reductive, essentialist, and lack an intersectional approach to the data. Consultancy protocol allows for students, or even the instructor, to bring up an issue that intersects between dimensions of power and social status (i.e., how racism, sexism, and trans panic intersect in sport) that show up in the research or the sport itself.

Consultancy protocol is meant to be generative and may not function as intended when the dilemma is presented with an answer already in mind. Instead, the goal of the consultation is to encourage students to utilize each other's embodied knowledges to offer diverse perspectives.

Consequently, Consultancy protocol asks students to be reflective on their positionality as students, athletes, and researchers within their sociopolitical identities. Research cannot move forward without acknowledging research holds inherent biases based on discipline and must take steps to hold these biases accountable.

Participation Format 1: Tracking/Paraphrase and mirroring

When students have difficulty in being clear because of conciseness of their point and structure of their argument, tracking followed by paraphrase and mirroring is an active listening technique for the instructor to summarize, reiterate, and confirm the student's point so students feel heard and listened to.

Implementation:

Sometimes, students make good concluding points but there are points missing in their line of logic. I did this often when I was a student, and instructors who paraphrased and mirror my points helped me connect the dots between my own ideas.

Even when students are reaching the correct conclusion, they may not have the verbiage to fill in the gaps. At this point, techniques such as Asking for Themes allows for group collaboration on the ideas being tracked because co-learning is a group effort

Participation Format 2: Ask for Themes

When there are many relevant lines of thought and questioning for a particular topic, an instructor can ask the students to pick up on patterns between the ideas.

Implementation (Why You Chose It, Highlights, and Potential Pitfall):

Students come in with their own way of forming knowledge. Ask for Themes allow for students to take a step back and organize everyone's ideas and way of thinking into patterns to allow them to learn from each other.

The end result of Asking for Themes may not capture all the themes that the instructor has intended. But this also serves as an indicator for which class topic the instructor should revisit.

Participation Format 3: Balancing and Encouraging

Balancing asks students to offer different approaches or perspectives on a topic while Encouraging asks for students who have not spoken up yet as to include their perspective.

Implementation (Why You Chose It, Highlights, and Potential Pitfall):

Sometimes, the topic can be controversial. Balancing is necessary to include different positionalities and embodied perspectives on the issue so that the conversation is not one sided. Encouraging serves to remind students to allow for students who have not participated yet.

Balancing and encouraging is not meant to make room for devil's advocates, but it is a possibility this may happen. The above participation formats, Ask for Themes and Tracking/Paraphrase and mirroring is meant to help the class deconstruct the sides of a controversy and allows for building meta-awareness of the issue through discussion and dialogue.