

Student Success Summit
RCHSS, May 13, 2024
Dr. Michelle Devereaux, Professor of English and English Education

1. Community Building Activities

- a. Get-To-Know-You Bingo (Handout One)
- b. Interview Questions
 - i. Make sure students know they will be responsible for telling everyone the name of the person they interviewed and a couple of interesting things they talked about
 - ii. Potential Questions for the Interview
 1. If you had to wear one hat for the rest of your life, what hat would it be and why?
 2. Pineapple on pizza—yay or nay?
 3. What's your favorite kind of sweet treat?
 - a. The goal of the question is to be fun and light
 - b. I like to make sure students stay standing while reporting out on their peers' responses and standing next to the person they interviewed
- c. Throughout the semester, I ask students to “go and talk to someone you haven't spoken to yet today—get up and move across the room.” At the beginning of the semester, I remind them to get the person's name—they must always first introduce themselves. When we come back together as a class, I ask them to share their classmates' response, not theirs.
- d. The first few weeks of class, students really dislike this. However, at the end of the semester, I always get comments in the evaluations as to how much they appreciate this and how it impacted the community of the classroom and, therefore, their comfort.

2. Midterm Feedback (Handout Two)

- a. At midterm, I put a Google form link in my class agenda and ask them to answer the following questions:
 - i. What's going well? (The assignments, the readings, how class is set up, expectations, my teaching, etc.)
 - ii. What can be improved upon? (The assignments, the readings, how class is set up, expectations, my teaching, etc.)
 - iii. How can I improve as your professor?
 - iv. What other comments, questions, or concerns do you have about this class or anything else?
- b. By the next class, I've read through their feedback and identified patterns in their feedback. I then project these themes, and we discuss what we can change at that point in the semester (e.g., less of one book, more of another; more models for assignments). Even if I can't make changes they want made, I walk them through why those changes aren't realistic.

3. Diagnostic Assessments/Formative Assessments/Discussion Formats

- a. Agree/Disagree (Handout Three)
 - i. Create a list of statements (5-7) that students can either agree or disagree with, relating these statements to the theme of your unit or as a diagnostic assessment to see what students know or what they believe about the next topic of study
 - ii. Project one question at a time on the board
 - iii. On one side of the room, post a sign that says “agree”—on the opposite wall, post a sign that says “disagree”
 - iv. Go through each statement, asking students to move to the side of the room that represents their answer
 - v. I allow students stay in the middle of the room if they are unsure

- vi. Students must be ready to say why they agree, disagree, or in the middle
- vii. If there has been an interesting discussion around one of the projected statements, I give students the opportunity to change where they are standing in the room
 - 1. Many students will need time to think before they can speak
 - 2. You can give students a handout with the statements on it and have them write down their justification before the activity begins (the handout is a model of this)
- b. Silent Discussion—Quotes
 - i. Give each student two blank sheets of printer paper
 - ii. Ask students to pull two quotes from the readings that seem important to the larger theme of the day's readings (or unit of study)
 - iii. Have them write one quote in the middle of the page on one sheet of paper; have them write the second quote in the middle of the page on the second sheet of paper
 - iv. Ask them to place those pieces of paper around the room
 - v. Tell them to walk around the room with a pen/pencil and respond to the quotes they see; write their response on the white space around the quote (no one should write their name)
 - vi. They have to go deeper than “yes” or “I agree.” Questions they can consider (and you can project while they walk around the room) include the following:
 - 1. How does this quote relate to the larger idea of the reading or theme of the unit of study?
 - 2. How does this quote relate to what we've been studying in the class?
 - 3. Do you agree with this quote? Explain why or why not.
 - vii. After a while of students walking around the room and writing on different papers, ask students to find their quote and take the papers back to their desk. Have students read through other students' comments. Ask who has an interesting response or responses to the quote and ask them to share it. You can build discussion off of these responses.
- c. Snowball Discussion (Handout Four)
 - i. Have students either write a question or make a statement about what you are studying at the top of a sheet of paper
 - ii. Have them ball up the sheet of paper and then throw it across the room
 - iii. Students should pick up a balled piece of paper close to them and either answer the question or respond to the statement
 - iv. Have students ball up the piece of paper and then throw it again
 - v. Students should pick up the piece of paper, and you can then have a discussion--Who had a good question? Who had a good response? (You can also have them discuss in groups)
 - vi. Again, the fear of sharing their own questions or responses is removed in this activity
- d. Other quick formative assessments
 - i. Finger on your nose, finger on your chin, finger on your cheek
 - ii. Thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs to the side
 - iii. On a scale from 1 to 5, how well do you understand the concept. One is “I totally don't understand,” and five is “I so understand everything about this.”

Handout One: Get-To-Know-You Bingo

Walk around the room and get to know your peers! Ask people the questions in the boxes; however, please make sure that YOU write their names in the boxes (this will help you learn others' names faster! :)

Please don't use the same person's name for more than two boxes (because we are a small class--in a regular sized class, I wouldn't let students use more than one name for a box).

Has had a broken bone.	Has been to two other countries.	Has been to two National Parks.	Has a younger sibling.	Has a pet that isn't a dog or cat.
Is left-handed.	Can play a musical instrument.	Has read all of the Harry Potter books.	Plays a sport regularly.	Has sang in front of an audience.
Ate ice cream in the past week.	Has never gotten a speeding ticket.	Has built a snowperson as an adult.	Likes sushi.	Has driven across the country.
Has had stitches.	Doesn't like chocolate.	Doesn't have an Instagram account.	Went to the movie theater this month.	Loves broccoli.
Has lived out of the state.	Has been to Florida more than five times.	Has tried yoga.	Can run a mile.	Likes to bake.

Handout Two: Midterm Feedback, Examples

Example One

What's going well?

- Teaching Inquiry
- Good vibes
- Think Pieces and feedback and opportunity to rewrite
- Manageable readings

What can be improved?

- Open interpretation of the readings during class discussion (love this idea...will be doing this in all of our readings discussion times ☺)
- More examples of previous assignments ([see assignments folder](#))
- Revisit the Differentiation Assignment
- Too many readings

Next steps?

- Frameworks in action (what to do?)
 - Lesson plan ideas, lesson plan ideas, lesson plan ideas
- Small teaching things, like *what do I do with my hands?*
- How to teach tough ideas without making folks upset...

How can I improve?

- If there are common mistakes that you have seen previous classes make time and time again on upcoming assignments, instruction before the assignment is due gives me a chance to try first, then revise with further feedback on an informed attempt.
- More guided reading interaction

Example Two

What's going well?

- The readings
- Teaching Inquiries
- Assignments

What can be improved?

No themes in the comments (meaning that no two people said the same thing), but here are some comments that I want to address:

- Buying a book for one chapter
- PDFs not printing entirely? (anyone else having this issue?)
- Anchor texts (class next semester dedicated to this)
- Venting time

How can I improve?

- Y'all think I'm doing a pretty good job. :)
 - Joy, positivity, organization, responsive, supportive
- My life as a teacher...
- Theory (and its connection to practice) begins on October 24
- Asynchronous class (next semester)

Anything else?

- Nothing (but that might change, you say :)

Changes based on feedback:

- First five to ten minutes of each class:
 - highs and lows of the week in the classroom; you will then have an opportunity to share the other person's high or low...
- Where is this time coming from? We aren't doing any more double TIs, which has opened some class time for us :)

Handout Three: Agree/Disagree

Directions: Do you agree or disagree with each statement below? Mark 1 for **absolutely and totally disagree** and mark 5 for **resoundingly agree**. You can put yourself somewhere in between as well. On the lines below, explain why you ranked yourself where you did.

1. Building a strong classroom community can help students succeed in our classrooms.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree				Agree

2. Student success is only up to the choices of the student.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree				Agree

3. Our instructional choices can impact our students' success.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree				Agree

4. Midterm feedback is a good way to support student success.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree				Agree

5. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree				Agree

Handout Four: Snowball Activity, Example Directions

1. Respond to one of the statements on a slip of paper. Make sure to label which statement you responded to.
 - a. I think we should continue to teach children fairy tales.
 - b. Fairy tales help society remember important morals.
 - c. We should begin teaching our children more modern tales with more modern themes.
2. Ball up your piece of paper and throw it across the room.
3. Pick up another piece of paper and respond to that person's response.
4. Throw the paper again.
5. Pick up another piece of paper. What is interesting on that slip of paper? Let's discuss as a class.