The Necessity of General Education

- Cognitive Development
  - Informed decision-making
  - Enhanced critical thinking
- Dynamic Workforce Environment Preparation
  - Exercising civic duties
  - Understanding of historic context
- Diversification of Learning
  - Preparation for wide spectrum of professions
  - Builds skills that can easily transfer between fields
- Insight into Social Affairs
  - Social norms
  - Cultural variations
- Enhanced Communication Skills
  - Written & oral communication
  - Nonverbal and tonality
- Problem Solving
  - Diagnosing the problem
  - Developing solutions
- Logic and Reasoning Development
  - Fact from fiction
  - Fallacies

Innovation & Adaptation In General Education

Far too often, students enter into their General Education courses with an attitude of “why am I taking this course? I am an (insert program) major?”

While faculty members often understand that their specialty is critical that approach it with immense passion and energy, that energy and excitement fails to transfer to students. Why? Simply, because they were right…they are not an (insert really awesome field) major.

General education programs must actively seek out methods to bridge this gap. Using instructional and curricular strategies, they must seek to create a student, rather than instructor, focused strategy.

Alternative stylistic approaches to instructor centered pedagogical practices:

1. The Current Event Quandary
   Transport the topic to modern times subject to the same technological implications of the day and have the students discuss it.

2. Adaptive Learning
   Incorporate a personalized learning system that allows students to quickly move beyond already mastered content and to focus on areas of higher need.

3. Academic Journaling
   Introduce student journaling to record what students learned and its real life relevance. Supports Reflective Practice.

4. Career Case Studies
   Develop assignments based around interacting with case studies that are linked to programmatic outcomes.

5. High Engagement Discussion Boards
   Create highly interactive online or on-ground discussions that provide opportunities to dialogue with instructor in small group settings.

6. Open Educational Resources
   Utilize OER to give students access to current information outside of a normal textbook while bringing in a multitude of verified sources to support diversity in learning.

Embracing Adaptive Technology

Faculty often fear adaptive learning (AL) will make the faculty role redundant. In actuality, AL requires faculty engagement. Utilizing AL provides enhanced tools for faculty: new and innovative techniques to support the learning process along with the personalization of the student educational experience.

Advantages of Personalized Content

1. Supports current level of student understanding while offering a targeted mechanism of filling in the gaps.
2. Reduces burnout and increases application of knowledge.
3. Reinforces relevancy of course content
4. Allows for faster revision and modification of content to meet industry standards.
5. Empowers educators and students to be the arbiters of their own education.

CTU Successes

Using a mission driven approach that combines curriculum and instructional innovation with adaptive learning technologies, CTU’s General Education Department was able to demonstrate significant improvements in multiple content areas in 2016:

- History Modern American 1950 to Present:
  - HIST101 shows stark improvement year over year with higher student success rates. The use of adaptive learning technology allowed for content to be driven by the students prior knowledge. Use of current events as content drivers with regard to program outcomes led to positive student feedback and outcomes.

- Math: Data Driven Statistics
  - MATH301 (the math class with the lowest completion rate) saw a double digit increase in student success rates after adjusting from traditional platform to Intellipath supported by instructor focused learning rather than general overall lecture.

- Humanities: World Values and Cultures
  - Due to retraining of faculty and reinforcing classroom innovation while using adaptive learning HUM250 showed substantial immediate improvements at the end of 2016.

Use of Open Educational Resources

CTU has developed several Beyond the Book guides for its General Education courses. These guides offer new and innovative ways to interact with the content and support academic success.

Housed in the library shell utilizing LibGuides provided by SpringShare the BtB guide allows for a permlink reservoir to keep the content intact.

The utilization of OER Resources for General Education fosters and reiterates the ongoing relevancy of the content for today’s world.

Thank you for viewing our poster presentation: over the imperative nature of General Education and steps we can take to preserve the impact it has on the lives of our students, no matter what type of institution we serve.

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