

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Virtual Conference 2021 Proposal

Preferred Track: Teaching Practice **Format:** Workshop

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Student Academic Conversations: Benefits, Tools, and Strategies

Students are often ready to receive knowledge from their instructor through traditional means; lectures and presentations. This format provides little effort from the student to process and apply the concepts being addressed. The implementation of peer conversations has been linked to positive student outcomes (Resnick, Asterhan, Clarke, & Schantz, 2018). Possible benefits include an increased sense of belonging (Masika & Jones, 2016), higher retention, increased participation, improved communication and leadership skills, and exposure to diverse perspectives (Cornell University, 2021). Another benefit that students receive from collaboration with peers is a high feeling of accomplishment (Skager et al, 2016). The authentic peer interaction must be strategic and preplanned by the instructor for maximum benefits. The implementation of the following tools and strategies promotes equal participation from all students and the opportunity to share their thoughts, apply newly acquired knowledge, and pose questions.

The following instructional tools and strategies will be discussed and practiced by the participants through an interactive presentation. Participants will reflect individually and with their peers on how to implement academic conversation into their individual courses. Questions, comments, and concerns will also be addressed.

Instructional Tools

1. Conversation Mats: Table markers that easily identify each person at a table via letter and a number for easy identification of roles during conversations.
2. Digital Timers: Embedded timers in presentations.
3. Manipulatives: The use of card sorts, objects, etc can enrich student conversation.

Instructional Strategies

1. Embedded Questions: Pre-determined questions placed strategically within presentations to allow students the opportunity to process and apply knowledge with peers.
 2. Sentence Stems: Conversation starters that encourage students to participate.
 3. Round Table: Using the conversation mats, allow every student the opportunity to share their thoughts about a posed question or statement within an allotted amount of time.
- References available upon request.

References

Cornell University (2021). Center of Teaching and Learning: Collaborative learning.

<https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/engaging-students/collaborative-learning>

Masika, R., & Jones, J. (2016). Building student belonging and engagement: insights into higher education students' experiences of participating and learning together. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(2), 138-150. 10.1080/13562517.2015.1122585

Meston, H. M., Phillips Galloway, E., & McClain, J. B. (2021). "They're the Ones Who Hold the Answers": Exploring Educators' and Students' Conceptions of Academic Conversation. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 64(4), 409-419. 10.1002/jaal.1127

Resnick, L.B., Asterhan, C.S., Clarke, S.N., & Schantz, F. (2018). Next generation research in dialogic learning. In G.E. Hall, L.F. Quinn, & D.M. Gollnick (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of teaching and learning* (pp. 323–338). Medford, MA: John Wiley & Sons

Scager, K., Wiegant, F. A. C., Boonstra, J., Peeters, A. J. M., & Vulperhorst, J. P. (2016). Collaborative learning in higher education: Evoking positive interdependence. *CBE Life Sciences Education*, 15(4), ar69. 10.1187/cbe.16-07-0219

Teacher Toolkit: Card Sort (2017). ESC Region 13. www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOvXj7b6AhQ.

Teacher Toolkit: Sentence Stems (2017). ESC Region 13. www.youtube.com/watch?v=ops6ITKWUWg

Cleveland Presentation Description

This presentation will discuss the importance of communication skills and equal participation from all students along with examining tools and strategies that promote its implementation.