

2015

Effective Teaching in Higher Education for the 21st Century Adult Learner

Denise Murchison Payton
Walden University

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Denise Payton

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Dr. Joanna Karet, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Mary Dereshiwsy, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2015

Abstract

Effective Teaching in Higher Education for the 21st Century Adult Learner

by

Denise Murchison Payton

MA, Fayetteville State University, 1999

BA, North Carolina A&T State University, 1979

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

May 2015

Abstract

As college populations are becoming increasingly diverse, institutions must find ways to meet the needs of their nontraditional students. Nontraditional adult learners are self-directed, ready to learn, and are internally motivated to engage in problem-centered learning. The purpose of this study was to expand and refine an active learning seminar in a higher education setting to improve the quality of teaching, student engagement, and retention rates. The site of the study was a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in which adult students over 25 constituted 49% of the population. The faculty members at this site predominantly employed traditional instructional methods. Action research was used to explore 6 faculty members' perceptions of active learning approaches before and after they attended an active learning seminar. Before and after the seminar, observations of student engagement, using the Direct Observation Instructional Management (DOIM) checklist, were conducted. Interviews with the faculty members explored their perceptions and needs regarding use of active learning strategies. Interview data were analyzed thematically and pre and post themes were compared. On the DOIM, student engagement was observed to increase in 2 classes. Results, including strategies that increased engagement, were integrated into a seminar that can be implemented at the same HBCU. Social change implications are that faculty members may begin to use techniques that will more effectively engage adult learners, leading to greater retention of knowledge and a likely increase in the graduation rate of students.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this terminal degree to my children, Jarae and Jared Payton, my parents, the Late James and Lorease Murchison, and my sister and brothers, Vernell, Howard, and Marion, who passed away during my journey. A special thank you to my sister Ethelyn Gibbs, who was my biggest cheerleader when I felt like giving up, my brother James, who told me I could do anything with a plan, and my sister Agnes, who though far away supported my educational pursuits. It would have been impossible to begin and finish such as task without your support. I love each of you and I dedicate this degree to you.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Higher education must be tailored to meet the needs of diverse learners if the United States is going to be competitive in the global economy (Chan, 2010; Mathis, 2010). Past enrollment demographics show lower percentages of younger college learners (younger than 25 years of age) and a higher percentage of students 25 and older (Kasworm, 2010). Currently, adult learners attend not only community colleges, but also traditional 4-year higher education institutions. When students return to higher education, they are often in need of remediation or developmental education to become college or career ready. Most colleges are not equipped to offer this support. This is necessary if students are to succeed in this global economy.

The University of Study (UOS) began as a traditional Historically Black College and University (HBCU) with a student population in their late teens and 20s. According to a report from the school administration, the UOS is currently comprised of 49% adult learners. The UOS has a student body that includes first generation college students, nontraditional working students, single parent households, and members of the military, as well as multiple ethnicities.

Although HBCUs have been successful in educating students for over 100 years, some of the techniques are currently not working. Diverse adult learners bring specific needs to organized learning for many reasons. Adult, ethnically diverse learners see themselves as individuals who want to be active participants in their learning experience (Chan, 2010). Their sense of identity rests upon their personal experiences, and they

bring with them a wealth of experience that instructors can tap into when teaching them (Gardner, 1991; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2013). Twenty-first century learners come with different values and beliefs, and these learners are successful when their classroom instructors actively engage them, utilizing their rich histories and their inclination for hands-on learning (Hussain, Khan, & Ramzan, 2013).

Active learning strategies include exploring personal attitudes and values, engaging the student in critical thinking, and encouraging student engagement through giving and eliciting feedback (Eison, 2010). These strategies also encourage students to reflect on their experiences. Researchers have found active strategies to be more effective for retention of knowledge and student engagement (Krain, 2010; Michel, Cater, & Varela, 2009). More time is spent engaging students in projects, breaking them up into groups, and providing opportunities for them to apply what they have learned with immediate feedback (Eison, 2010). In active learning strategies, instructors evaluate the learning process rather than the outcome. In spite of research (that has shown passive approaches to be less effective than active approaches (Michel, 2009; Tanner, 2009), especially for adult learners (Hussain et al., 2013), many instructors in colleges and universities rely on the 50-minute lecture as their primary method of instruction.

Many professors have been lecturing for their entire professional lives. Most educators still find it difficult to acknowledge the contrasting needs and expectations of adult learners (Townsend & Bates, 2007). These professors have learned from lectures and have not been exposed to other teaching styles. Moreover, they may not be aware of how they can get the instructor-provided content across in different ways (Townsend &

Bates, 2007). According to Cretu (2014), “this view of university teaching [regarding active learning methods] in terms of generating students learning can be more widely accepted by the faculty if they are assisted in their pedagogical development process according to this perspective” (p. 167). Given the diversity of today’s classroom, it is imperative that instructors be introduced to the needs of their diverse adult learners. Malcolm Knowles was right; the adult learner is a “neglected species” (O’Toole & Essex, 2012, p. 190).

The Purpose of the Study

In keeping with the recommendations of Cretu (2014) regarding assisting faculty in pedagogical development, the purpose of this study was to explore faculty members’ perceptions of active learning approaches before and after they were exposed to an active learning seminar and were encouraged to implement these approaches in their classrooms. Another aim of this study was to explore faculty members’ perceptions of how these approaches influence student engagement.

Nature of the Study

In this study, I used an action research design to explore the extent to which faculty members who used primarily lecture modes of teaching could begin to implement active research strategies. I administered interviews before and after conducting a seminar on active teaching methods to determine the perceptions of the teachers of these strategies and the effect on student engagement. Due to the use of action research, there was a continuous reflection on data throughout data collection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007). Using ex-post facto observation, I audited selected subjects in their classrooms

prior to the seminar. I used this information to formulate a benchmark assessment of present teaching practices in terms of use of active learning strategies and student engagement. After preobservation, a seminar illuminating alternative ways for instructors to organize lessons in higher education utilizing active learning strategies was conducted.

An instructor at UOS presented different strategies to faculty members, whose subject areas included art, theater, and dance; she showed faculty members other ways to present material to students aside from the dominant form of lecture. During the seminar, instructors participated in activities and brainstormed ways to incorporate new strategies into at least one of their classes during the current semester. Instructors were asked by the UOS presenter to notate the differences in their approach and ultimate rigor in the classroom.

I then conducted a postobservational visit to look for implementation of one of the strategies presented in the seminar to see how instructors' styles of teaching changed, and whether there was any effect on student engagement. I interviewed professors individually post seminar and asked about their perceptions of the newly learned strategies, what worked or did not work, and if they would be willing to adopt the strategies in more than one class. Through the process of triangulation, which corroborates evidence from different individuals and different methods of data collection, the validity of this research was enhanced (Creswell, 2012; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007).

Definition of the Problem

UOS was comprised of 49% nontraditional adult learners. Adult learners are self-directed, and they have vast experiences they bring to their learning. They are at a stage in life where they are ready to learn, and they are internally motivated to engage in problem-centered learning (Chan, 2010; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). However, many professors at UOS continue to use lecture methods, which are less likely to engage these students (Michel et al., 2009). If educators want to engage today's students they need to learn how to employ strategies in the classroom to do so. This study offered professors at UOS a seminar so they could update their skills and evaluate the efficacy of those strategies by observing the results in their own classrooms.

Rationale

In order for university professors to be scholars who will make a difference in society and be facilitators of learning, researchers need to analyze and scrutinize the effectiveness of their teaching styles to ensure they are adequate for the needs of 21st century learners. Presently, faculty members are hired for the knowledge of their content, and not for the delivery of subject matter. Many instructors have obtained their terminal degrees and moved directly into higher education to begin a teaching career, and their expertise may be in the science of their subject and not in the art of teaching (Marzano, 2007). I utilized action research to expose faculty members to active learning strategies in a form of a seminar.

Wells (2009) stated that his own experience with action research has shown that when faculty engage in collaborative research they have "been successful in developing

new ways of teaching that, based on their own experiences with particular groups of learners, have significantly enriched the learning of their students” (p. 56). Other researchers have confirmed the efficacy of action research on teaching performance (Greenwood, 2007; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Stringer, 2003). In addition, I was employed at UOS, conducted research, and attended the seminar, which was presented by UOS. Research also shows that when “university researchers are involved, their role is a service role to the teachers” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007, p. 273). Such university researchers are often advocates for “teachers’ knowledge,” p. 273). Therefore, the role of this researcher in the current study utilizing action research was to advocate for “teachers’ knowledge” (p. 273).

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

The UOS’s fundamental mission was to educate teachers; however, other disciplines have been added throughout the years. It is the second oldest of 17 institutions in the constituent state system. There are faculty members who have been teaching at the school for over 50 years, many of whom are still using the lecture method to teach 21st century students. Teacher-centered instruction predominates, especially in content areas such as history, mathematics, biology, sociology, and the arts. Lack of a fit between teaching techniques and students’ preferred style of learning may affect the current retention rate of the university, which is 78%. Seventy-eight percent of students who enroll at UOS go on to graduate. As Michel et al. (2009) stated, these traditional methods still predominate; nonetheless, students fail to retain as much material as they do

when they are taught in an active environment. These teacher-centered approaches do not meet significant needs of the 21st century learners and global scholars.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

In traditional higher education, instructors are expected to be in command of their content, and they can be considered as the guardians of the knowledge (Shorter, 2012). The teacher delivers the instruction and the students listen, takes notes, retain as much as possible, and are eventually tested on the facts (Innovation in Education, 2012). In order to reach 21st century college learners with a variety of scholarship patterns, it is important to incorporate many styles of teaching (Kozar, 2008). When teachers strive for effectiveness, they will utilize an array of analytical techniques to solve problems. Some of the strategies that have been successful in the college setting include the following.

The *coaching strategy* is a new approach (Haston, 2007) that is student-centered, takes learners from where they are, and moves them forward. Students possess different skill levels and the professors take visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners and produce sound students. This requires modifying lesson delivery methods. The *teacher as a facilitator* is another model of instruction that can be used in which learning content is predetermined by the instructor, and students acquire this content at their own pace (Madsen, 2008). The students take responsibility for their learning and have some say in the pacing of the skill-sets.

Active strategies take concepts that are complex and difficult to understand and transform them into something students can integrate into their daily lives. It is true that active learning methods require more time in preparation, but more knowledge is

obtained in the process (Michel et al., 2009). It is important to encourage educators to use a plethora of activities to actively engage students in the learning process (Cretu, 2014). One important factor in active learning styles is the information that students acquire, which is focalized information; this is the outcome of a learner's clearly perceiving and internalizing the subject matter.

In addition, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) with African American students describes frameworks, best practices, and methods through a sociocultural lens.

“Culturally relevant pedagogy is designed to . . . encourage teachers to ask about the nature of the student-teacher relationship, the curriculum, schooling, and society”

(Houchen, 2013, p. 98). According to Houchen (2013), “warm demander” (p. 98) is a term given to teachers of students of color who consistently maintain high expectations, demonstrate care and concern, and manage the classroom environment expertly.

Teachers who know how to motivate students through tapping into their intrinsic understanding are a key component of these students' academic achievement. When teachers strive for effectiveness, they will utilize a variety of analytical techniques to solve problems. These techniques include active learning, active listening, ink shedding, and learning, to name only a few (Wlodkowski, 2008). These methods will efficiently communicate goals and begin interplay of ideas and concepts.

In order to provide and guarantee academic rigor and student success, an instructor must have clear long- and short-term goals. Instructors must produce a realistic syllabus and may be held accountable for learning outcomes for students at the beginning of each semester. The syllabus should integrate technology, core-learning objectives, and

if applicable, include co-curricular or cross-categorical methods (Innovation in Education, 2012).

Syllabi in education also must include a module for the military adult learner and differentiation for at risk/ disabled adult learners to ensure the knowledge outcomes can be measured. Military veterans enter higher education in increasing numbers, and by learning the strengths, needs, and experience of these students, instructors will be able to better facilitate advocacy for student veterans (Ryan, Carlstrom, Hughley, & Harris, 2011). Students, who are homeless, members of migrant worker families, and living in poverty, are among our most at-risk due to their circumstances (Grant & Stronge, 2008).

In addition to using a variety of teaching strategies, the development of self-confidence in students, especially the adult learner, is of vital importance and can affect academic success (Otacioglu, 2008). Most people develop self-confidence during childhood; however, it can take place at any time. Facing fear is one of the most difficult tasks, and adults may experience this challenge as they return to school; however, facing fear is what creates the conditions for success. Returning to school from a career in the military or as an adult learner can help raise the confidence levels in students, especially if their instructors utilize active learning strategies (Krain, 2010). Researchers have shown that students develop a sense of personal efficacy, which involves an increase in confidence levels and a willingness to take risks when actively engaged in their learning; confidence is increases as students are able to express their own ideas both verbally and through hands-on projects (Krain, 2010). For example, group work of any nature, large

or small, directed or mutually developed, is of great benefit to students at all stages of the development of expertise (Michel et al., 2009).

I am the Director of Choral Activities at UOS. Music educators in all educational phases should encourage their students to participate in a wide range of group music making. In higher education, music students find group participation of all kinds valuable throughout their musical careers, and they indicate satisfaction at having had sufficient opportunities within their course to participate in a wide variety of participatory musical activities (Kokotsaki, 2007).

Guiding/Research Questions

Prior to this study, most faculty members at the UOS continued to use the lecture method and did not try other approaches to teaching. Many teachers may not use active learning strategies because of lack of exposure to them; they also may not understand the needs of the adult learners in their classes or the benefits of these strategies. Active strategies in the form of group work of any nature, large or small, directed or mutually developed, is clearly of great benefit to students at all stages of the development of expertise (Michel et al., 2009). The following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on faculty members' perceptions of the effectiveness of these methods on student engagement and learning?

2. What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on student engagement after an instructor attempts to incorporate the recently learned material into his or her classroom?

Definitions

Active learning: This strategy places the responsibility of learning on learners, which results in cooperative learning; Active learning strategies change the instructor's role to that of an observer, adviser, or consultant (Wlodkowski, 2008).

Active listening: Instructors can paraphrase the message they heard and check out the accuracy of their assumptions before responding (Wlodkowski, 2008).

Andragogy: A theory developed by Malcolm Knowles specifically for adult learning. Knowles emphasized that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for their decisions. Adult learning programs must accommodate this fundamental aspect (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

Assessment: Documenting what is taught in measurable terms (Miller, Linn, & Gronlund, 2009).

Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence: The capacity to use your whole body or parts of your body (your hands, your fingers, your arms) to solve a problem, make something, or produce something, as with music and dance. The most evident examples are people in athletics or the performing arts, particularly dancing or acting (Conti, 2008).

Buzz groups: Classes are split into subgroups for a brief discussion of a problem (Hotler, 2013).

Collaborative learning: Collaborative learning can be described as learning that occurs because of interactions between members of a collective (meaning two or more individuals; Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013).

Construct meaning: Many entering students, as well as the faculty of these students, have identified that the importance of reading and studying is to construct meaning; these activities require skills that are often underdeveloped or nonexistent (Chun Wei Choo, 2006).

Effective teaching strategies: Marzano (2012) has identified nine strategies for effective teaching and learning. They are as follows: (a) Identifying similarities and differences, (b) summarizing and taking notes, (c) reinforcement, (d) homework and practice, (e) nonlinguistic representations, (f) cooperative learning, (g) setting objectives, (h) generating and testing hypothesis ,and (i) cues, questions, and advance organizers (Marzano, 2012).

Existential intelligence: This is the ability and proclivity to pose (and ponder) questions about life, death, and ultimate realities (Smith, 2008).

Facilitate: The instructor guides the process, as opposed to merely presenting information. Gonzáles (2011) stated that an instructor is a facilitator for problem solving.

Ink shedding: Students exchange papers and read the other's comments, continuing this exchange for several papers. The instructor then asks students to report on what they found out or on what patterns they saw in the papers read as the basis for a discussion (Hotler, 2013).

Intrapersonal intelligence: The process of having an awareness of oneself; knowing who you are, what you can do, what you want to do, how you react to things, which things to avoid, and which things to gravitate toward (Vesely, Saklofske, & Leschied, 2013).

Interpersonal intelligence: The ability to understand other people. What everyone needs, but is especially important for teachers, clinicians, salespersons, or politicians—anybody who deals with other people (Vesely et al., 2013).

Learning styles: Learning styles are innate preferences for learning. Everyone has a mix of learning styles. Some people may find that they have a dominant style of learning and use other styles to a far lesser degree (Blakely & Tomlin, 2008).

Lecture: Intended to present information or teach people about a particular subject. An accomplished lecturer can stimulate, engage, arouse and exit a learner's mind without the necessity for "talking" from the students (Galbraith, 2004).

Linguistic intelligence: The capacity to use language to express what is on one's mind and to understand other people. Any kind of writer, orator, speaker, lawyer, or other person for whom language is an important stock in trade has great linguistic intelligence (Conti, 2008).

Logical/mathematical intelligence: The capacity to understand the underlying principles of some kind of causal system, the way a scientist or a logician does. In addition, this intelligence is useful to manipulate numbers, quantities, and operations, the way a mathematician does (Conti, 2008).

Metacognition: Higher order thinking that enables understanding (Kreitler, 2012).

Modified instruction: The strategy of using a variety of teaching techniques (Kreitler, 2012).

Multiple intelligences: Criteria for a behavior to be considered intelligence (Conti, 2008).

Musical rhythmic intelligence: The capacity to think in music; to be able to hear patterns, and recognize them, and perhaps manipulate them. People who have strong musical intelligence not only remember music easily, but they also cannot get it out of their minds, and so it is omnipresent (Conti, 2008).

Naturalist intelligence: The ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) and sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations; Conti, 2008).

Spatial intelligence: The ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind. When a sailor or airplane pilot navigates the large spatial world, or the way a chess player or sculptor represents a more circumscribed spatial world they are demonstrating this ability. Spatial intelligence can be used in the arts or in the sciences (Conti, 2008).

Paradigms: A pattern or a model. In the world of research design, its meaning refers to “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Creswell, 2009 p. 6).

Pedagogy: The science or profession of teaching (Clarke & Clarke, 2009).

Peer learning: An educational practice in which students interact with other students to attain educational goals (Juwah, 2006).

Reframing: Instructors clarify the assumptions behind the individual’s argument and then invites him or her to see alternative possibilities (Hotler, 2013)

Student-centered: An approach to education that focuses on the needs of the students, rather than those of others involved in the educational process, such as teachers and administrators (Haston, 2007).

Shared understanding: Consists of planning and preparing instruction, as well as reflecting on teaching and learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Teacher-centered: The teacher is able to direct learning and plans how the course should proceed (Haston, 2007).

Warm demander: A term given to teachers of students of color who consistently maintain high expectations, demonstrate care and concern, and manage the classroom environment expertly (Houchen, 2013).

Review of the Literature

Current teaching practices in many HBUCs do not take into account the needs of the 21st century adult learner. Tackling unproductive teaching practices in the form of action research may offer a straightforward strategy for social change. Researchers suggest that those who wish to bring widespread change to teaching and learning could execute such approaches (Cretu, 2014; Southwell, 2010). According to McConnell, Parker, Eberhardt, Koehler, and Lundeberg (2013), “Research suggests that professional development that engages teachers in instruction inquiry over an extended time through collaborative professional learning communities (PLCs) is effective in improving instruction and student achievement” (p. 267).

Strategy for Searching the Literature

In this literature review, I included published academic journals written from 1968 to the present and primary source documents. I conducted the literature search digitally through the EBSCO Host research database and the ProQuest research database. I used key word phrases in combination, including *Howard Gardner, multiple intelligences, andragogy, Howard Gardner and efficacy, active research, active research and efficacy, adult learners, nontraditional learners, and culturally relevant teaching*. I found primary source documents originating from books as well, including Howard Gardner's (1991) *Unschooled Mind* and *Creating Minds* (Gardner, 1993a).

Theoretical Framework

Malcolm Knowles' (1968) andragogy and Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences comprise the theoretical framework of this study. I will review these theories in depth.

Andragogy. Malcolm Knowles (1968), known as the father of andragogy, is one of the prominent theorists in adult learning. He was a leading pioneer in adult learning in the United States. Knowles contended that educating adults requires different principles and techniques than those of children. Adults bring specific needs to organized learning for many reasons. According to Knowles et al. (2005), learning is a lifelong process, whereby experiences shape one's education. Knowles articulated several tenets about adult learning. First, when adults recognize their needs regarding learning, they are motivated, and they will be satisfied as they gain knowledge. Secondly, adult learning is life-centered as well as situational, so learning takes place experientially, and through

problem solving. Because adults experience change at different stages during life, modifications in individual students should be accounted for when teaching adult learners; therefore, pace, timing, and style are measured. Finally, when adults find value in the topics taught, their most profound resource is experience.

Regarding the first tenet, they are at a stage in life where they are ready to learn, and they internally motivated to engage in problem-centered learning (Chan 2010). Adult learners learn best when they are active participants; they tend to be self-directed, and they desire practical answers for real-life problems. Teachers utilizing Knowles' theory are facilitators of learning and they utilize a process of mutual inquiry. In this respect, teachers take on the subordinate role.

Due to the differences between adults and those at other stages of development, traditional pedagogy has no place in adult learning education. As stated in the last of the above four tenets, scholars of andragogy hold that the life experiences of the learner are of chief importance, for they have vast experiences they bring to their learning. In addition, it is important for adult learners to preserve sense of self in their perception of the world, and this sense of identity rests upon their personal experiences (Knowles et al., 2005).

According to Knowles (2005), the adult learner's experience is key. Thus, the process of learning is more important than content of learning. This process provides meaning that is of utmost importance to adult learners. This leads to the differences between andragogy and pedagogy when evaluating the learners' knowledge. Because andragogy places more emphasis on process than on content, noting engagement and

learning through collaboration with others is often key to evaluating the learning that takes place.

Teachers using andragogical approaches are encouraged to have students take part in creative projects to evaluate students, where engaging students in learning is key. Knowles argued that education must not conform to set patterns, but rather it is necessary to discover new strategies and incentives for learning. Educators that utilize the principles of andragogy tend to agree that one should use best practices to meet adult learners' needs in such a way that keeps the adult learner at the epicenter of the educational experience. Similarly, other instructors may choose to approach the learning through a cooperative, self-directed educational experience that demonstrates respect (Holton, Wilson, & Bates, 2009)

DeTurk (2011) stated there are two traditions guided by Knowles' theory. Student groups are diverse and possess varied experience, which means that different standpoints in the collective learning process will be present. Secondly, instructors who use active learning styles are inspired to teaching and utilize their ability to instill critical thinking among learners; this is perhaps the most important tradition (DeTurk, 2011). In problem-posing education, facilitators of learning guide their students in critical thinking and identify ways to shape the interests of adult learners (Michel et al., 2009). They help kindle an interest in transforming and humanizing the world by encouraging their learners to engage in open conversation (Knowles et al., 2005).

Due to changes in trade, economic, social, and educational issues, globalization has become a common term in the 21st century. Educators need to provide individuals

with complex training, in terms of knowledge as well as skills, through creative activities that enable them to adapt to the changes in the environment (Chan, 2010). The perspectives of andragogy are timeless as they apply to adult education in a multicultural world.

However, andragogy has been applied in a variety of academic and vocational sectors. The technical sciences as well as humanities use active learning approaches that are appropriate for adult learners. Adult learners of differing socioeconomic backgrounds in various countries have found this approach to be useful (Chan, 2010).

Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences. Howard Gardner, American Developmental psychologist, as well as famed Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard Graduate School, is known for his theory of multiple intelligences. The multiple intelligences theory views students as nontraditional learners. According to Gardner (2004), no two individuals possess the same cognitive alignment; therefore, each has a rich and distinguished mind. Gardner contended that education would be more successful if curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation are derived from this approach.

Gardner developed the theory of multiple intelligences in 1983, emphasizing a more thorough understanding of the word intelligence. Gardner (1998) defined intelligence as “a psychobiological potential to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in at least one cultural context” (p. 20). Human cognition contains distinct cultural abilities, talents, or mental abilities that can be identified as intelligences (Gardner, 1993a). As such, Gardner discovered that intelligences could occur in multiple areas connected to our senses, through which we take in and try to make sense of our

world (Gardner, 1995). Gardner speculated that each individual possesses intelligences in multiple areas, with no one person possessing the same strengths and weaknesses. The nine modalities with specific indicators formulated by Gardner (1993b) are as follows:

1. *Linguistic Intelligence*: Abilities regarding verbal and written communication.
2. *Logical-Mathematical Intelligence*: Ability regarding logic, as well as symbols and operations with numbers.
3. *Musical Intelligence*: Ability to manipulate rhythm, melody, pitch, and harmony.
4. *Spatial Intelligence*: Ability to manipulate and orient to three-dimensional space.
5. *Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence*: Ability to perform physical functions in movement.
6. *Interpersonal Intelligence*: Ability to interact and relate well to other people.
7. *Intrapersonal Intelligence*: Ability to understand oneself in terms of one's thoughts, preferences, emotions, and interests.
8. *Naturalistic Intelligence*: Ability to understand and categorize natural phenomena.
9. *Existential Intelligence*: Ability to think about phenomena or questions beyond the physical realm (Gardner, 1998).

The field of neuroscience has provided increasing scientific support to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Diamond, 1988, 1999; Dickinson, 2000; Eide & Eide, 2004). Zull (2003) spoke about the importance of "challenging the whole brain" (para.

4). He stated we “challenge the brain to carry out four main functions: receiving evidence (sensory cortex), making sense of information (back integrative cortex), fashioning new ideas from these meanings (front integrative cortex), and acting on those concepts (motor cortex)” (Zull, 2003, para. 4). These activities relate to the intelligences identified in the theory of multiple intelligences (Zull, 2003).

Since individual learning is varied, cultural factors affect skill sets and abilities. Multiple intelligences cater to diverse individualistic characteristics; hence, concentrating on them leads to teaching that is more effective because it addresses the diverse learners in the classroom. Multiple intelligences theory brings productivity and flexibility to teaching and learning (McFarlane, 2011).

Gardner’s theory applied to the 21st century learner. Cultural diversity is one of the most defining aspects of social life in the 21st century global society. McFarlane (2011) stated that this “diversity” (para. 1) in the classroom “mirrors” (para. 2) our world; it is reflected in students from all occupations, representing diverse cultures, nationalities, religions, socializations, and backgrounds, not to mention personalities. Major demographic changes are altering the social fabric of America, reflected in the culture of today’s students. There is a notable decline in family structure and upbringing. Ethnic and racial identities are becoming salient, and increases in immigration have all combined to alter the face of 21st century America (Voparil, 2006). The global 21st century classroom instructor must embrace differences, as the classroom is where these differences converge. In this mix of learners, we see creative, analytical, and practical intelligences that are potentially part of the nine intelligences described by Gardner

(2006). Therefore, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences offers a broader conceptual framework that assists in teaching these diverse students.

Moving from the narrow paths of delivery, such as lecture, to a means of delivery that diverse students will respond to, is one of the contemporary challenges in higher education. Gardner (1991) referred to the former mode of instruction as one conducted in a formal setting that stresses memorization from lecture and textbooks, and to the latter as learning by doing, or teaching and learning in the flow of an engagement with a project of some kind. In this way, learning can draw upon the multiple intelligences that Gardner recognized as inherent in each individual regardless of background. Instructors who use multiple intelligences theory recognize and appreciate the diversity and expansion of human skills and abilities and offer opportunities to develop these perspectives (Helding, 2010).

Gardner's theory in relation to musical education. In *Frames of the Mind*, Gardner (1993b) offered new perceptions about music, especially the singing voice. Music educators teach in an inclusive classroom with students who possess different levels of talent; therefore, results from cognitive studies like Gardner's are important. The hallmarks of the multiple intelligences theory can be seen in how music is able to be connected to other intelligences (Helding, 2010).

In Western European music, logical mathematical skills are utilized in negotiating tempo or speed of music as well as a sense of ratio (Helding, 2010). Spatial temporal reasoning deals with logic-based characterization of space and time, as well as using deduction systems. Bennett Reimer (1999) referred to specific music as a vehicle that

could enhance how we think, reason, and create. Spatial intelligence is at work when learning and processing music (Helding, 2010). Individuals who reproduce music, as conductors, performers, or composers do, must possess an overall consciousness of the author's intent and then convey that intent to their audience. All artists utilize bodily kinesthetic intelligence, which is adapted to their own expertise. Instrumentalists must use proper placement of their lips on mouthpieces for woodwinds and brass instruments, or proper holding of the bow for strings. The dancers and singers use their bodies as instruments (Helding, 2010).

Music also develops what Gardner referred to as the personal intelligences. Initially, Gardner separated personal intelligences from the other intelligences. Interpersonal intelligence is defined as "an ability to perceive and understand others' moods, desires, and motivations and intrapersonal intelligence is an understanding of one's own emotions" (Helding, 2010, p. 327). Personal intelligence therefore "is paramount to the worth of human life, and can be disastrous if there is poor intelligence in this area" (p. 327).

In personal intelligence, there are three levels of connection considered: the practical, biological, and philosophic. Music and interpersonal intelligence are intertwined; a musician must be able to have empathy in order to convey the meanings found in the music (Helding, 2010). This difference is seen between a performing artist and an amateur. Secondly, voice instructors nurture self-reflection in vocal students, which nurtures intrapersonal abilities (Helding, 2010). Gardner (as cited in Helding, 2010) calls the documentation that emerges out of this process "processfolios" as they

reflect growth and queries that arise during practice sessions. Philosophically, scientists agree with Gardener, who said that “not taking music seriously weakens the human condition” (as cited in Holding, 2010, p. 329). Arts educators have always suspected that human intelligence comes in many forms and that there is a wide array of capabilities, talents, and potential intelligences.

Music has the capacity to develop all of the multiple intelligences that Gardner (2006) described. In turn, musical intelligences are best assessed through musical means and not through a lens of logic and language. In the current study, instructors of the arts, primarily music, art, theatre, and speech, participated in workshops that exposed them to different modes of lesson presentation other than that of placing the student in a position of passively listening to an instructor lecture. In this way, faculty members engaged in cooperative learning, in which students are in groups of three or more, rather than alone, and assigned tasks, multiple-step exercises, projects, and even presentations. Here are just a few of the active learning techniques that the seminar presented:

1. Muddiest (or clearest) point: Students are asked what the clearest information they received is and what is the not.
2. Active response: Asking students for their honest reaction to the information.
3. Clarification Pauses: Let the information set in as it is being presented.
4. Student summary of another student’s answer: This promotes active listening
5. The Fish Bowl: Students are encouraged to write down one question about the lesson and share with the class.

6. Puzzle and paradox: Force students to find an answer to specific questions; this motivates critical thinking.
7. Note comparison and sharing: Modeling good skills and have them compare and share notes.

These methods of conveying instructional content are in keeping with Gardner's (2006) multiple intelligence theory. In using these approaches, instructors learn to offer immediate feedback that will benefit students to ensure educational progress and growth. Gardner's idea of teaching for understanding involves not only the accuracy with which it is learned but also the readiness in which it is recalled and used (Voparil, 2006).

Nontraditional Adult Learners

Nontraditional learners include students whose first language is other than English, parents of young children, first generation college students, single-parent households, migrant workers, older students, and those who receive government assistance (Choy, 2002). Past enrollment demographics at the UOS show lower percentages of younger college learners (younger than 25 years of age) and a higher percentage of older students 25 and older (Kasworm, 2010).

Some of these adult learners may have never learned how they learn best. Smith (1982), who is a prominent researcher in the field of adult education, wrote that helping someone "learning how to learn" is best accomplished when "a person is helped to analyze why he or she is having difficulty with an assignment, or why he or she succeeds with certain learning activities" (p. 19). Therefore, it is up to the institution to provide this developmental education for them to become college or career ready. Colleges must

understand that adult learners have specialized needs, a different orientation to education and learning, and that “because of time pressures, multiple options, adults’ own views of themselves, they are most likely to engage in education and to profit most from learning activities that are practical and problem-centered” (Smith, 1982, p. 39).

It is good to have a more diversified undergraduate student population, to include adult learners for the future sustainability of our nation (Kasworm, 2010). In order to prepare students to be competitive in a global economy, higher education must be tailored to meet the needs of diverse learners (Mathis, 2010). In addition, the nation has a long tradition of global citizenship and multicultural appreciation, and the changing demographics suggest that those in education must have a heightened appreciation for diverse needs of nontraditional adult learners. Tailoring education to meet the needs of diverse learners requires new ways of working with students in order to increase success.

Adult learners are critical consumers of their educational experience; they have enough experience to recognize the value of learning and the importance it has in their lives and daily existence (O’Toole & Essex, 2012). When adults are deprived of a quality education due to poorly fashioned learning practices, their tolerance is tested and they are not pleased. When classroom teachers lack effectiveness, the students do not always scrutinize them in the same manner; however, adults demand a better quality of instruction due to their personal expectations.

Adult learners are more apt to participate in class and engage in discussions during the learning process, and they are more apt to report their findings regarding the instructor and their pleasure or disappointment with the outcomes. In addition, educators

should make assumptions that the adult learner's attention span is longer than that of the younger learner. Effective educators use mastery-learning strategies to make sure all students remain actively engaged in the process. Offering different modes of lesson presentation aids in this process. When the lessons mix discussion and action, adult learners react positively to this approach. It is easy to assume students are engaged; nonetheless, they may be daydreaming. Adults are as willing as younger students to sit quietly while instructors deliver long lectures.

Most educators and researchers still find it difficult to acknowledge the contrasting needs and expectations of adult learners and children. Malcolm Knowles was right; the adult learner is a "neglected species" (O'Toole & Essex, 2012 p. 190). There is a need to acknowledge the expectations, limitations, and needs of adults. Adult learners bring real life into the educational environment, and these attributes are brought to the subject being taught.

Active Learning Strategies

Active Learning approaches. With passive approaches, the hope is that the new content will lead to conceptual understanding; however, the learning is derived from isolated forms of knowledge (Ueckert, 2008). The challenge then becomes how educators move students from passive to active learners. Learning passively is contrary to what one knows about learning and especially the way one learns in the arts and sciences. For example, the scientific process is active, because science is not just a body of knowledge but a way of knowing, while passive learning leads to boredom and apathy.

Active learning should take concepts that are difficult to understand and transform them into something students can integrate into their daily lives.

Active learning instructional strategies include exploring personal attitudes and values, engaging the student in critical thinking, and encouraging student engagement through giving and eliciting feedback. These strategies also encourage students to reflect on their experiences (Berger, 2002). When instructors utilize these strategies, typically a greater portion of time is spent helping students develop a deeper understanding and skill set and less time is spent transmitting information (Michel et al., 2009). In addition, instructors offer opportunities to students to apply what they have learned, as well as immediate feedback (Eison, 2010).

Students show understanding of content by demonstrating that they can recognize relationships and main ideas. Most are able to learn by adding this understanding to prior knowledge and making connections, which results in the need for reorganizing knowledge (White, 2011). Branson and Thomas (2013) stated, “Bottom line, hands-on problem-based learning (PBL) has increased student engagement and scholarship” (p. 21)

Four characteristics of active learning are prior learning, making connections, engagement, and social interaction. In active learning, instructors engage individuals in the process of learning, in making connections between ideas, and constructing new knowledge from their experiences. According to Ueckert (2008), all students learn more when actively engaged. Four other attributes of active learning include (a) students taking responsibility for their own learning, (b) active engagement of students in learning, (c) teachers providing activities that facilitate active learning, and (d) development of

controlling learning environments to incorporate cooperative relationships with other students (Odom, Glenn, Sanner, & Cannella, 2009). In order to engage students in active learning, teachers must ask questions, consider alternatives, give explanations that may change the discussion, and allow students to debate ideas.

Through active learning, students also develop a sense of personal efficacy and a willingness to take risks when expressing their own ideas and actions (Krain, 2010).

Students take responsibility for their learning; they learn to voice their own ideas and learn how to debate others. Through the process they develop academic efficacy.

Kandemir (2014) found that “responsibility as a student personality trait positively and significantly predicts the learning and performance approach achievement goals.

Students who have the responsibility trait are eager to learn and exhibit performance” (p. 97)

There are specific strategies that can be implemented for this kind of learning.

These strategies also quiet students and get them working instantaneously. Students are immersed into their work immediately because they are using knowledge from a previous lesson (Ueckert, 2008). When using worksheets for comprehension, the result may be more accidental than predictable because critical reading is not needed to complete the task. If the student is asked to conduct a laboratory investigation, they can move through the steps of that investigation like a recipe.

Faculty members, especially at the college level, may find it difficult to facilitate higher levels of student engagement and learning. Active learning is considered a useful methodology for actively involving students in their own learning; it helps them attain

critical thinking skills and complex objectives (Odom et al., 2009). Students are responsible not only for their own learning, but also for that of their peers, according to the philosophy.

Through active learning, faculty encourages students to use higher-order thinking skills. Library literature suggests information literacy is the aptitude to know when it is necessary, to be able to recognize, pinpoint, assess, and effectively use that knowledge to solve the problem, thus benefiting from active learning approaches; however, constraints in academic settings limit potential resources (Detlora, 2012).

Researchers also suggest that student demographics potentially affect student-learning outcomes, which are subdivided into three categories: psychological, behavioral, and benefit outcomes. Instructors who use active learning techniques help to facilitate changes in attitudes, values, self-efficacy, effort and student belief (Detlora, 2012, p. 149).

Efficacy of active learning approaches. Due to the increasing competitive demands in both the business world and academia, today's learner requires the most productive classroom experience (Chan, 2010). Therefore, there is a constant search for new and improved teaching methods (Michel et al., 2009). All researchers have found active learning approaches are more effective than passive approaches (Benek-Rivera & Matthews, 2004; Dorestani, 2005), but limited quantitative research exists on the topic (Michel et al., 2009).

Michel et al. (2009) examined student engagement in four types of case learning approaches: context settings, class preparations, class delivery, and continuous

improvement. He found that “the types of case learning that engaged student’s senses in multiple ways—case studies problem based learning and case studies using films as texts” (p. 291) were most effective. These four approaches are described as follows. Experiential learning is learning from relevant experiences, and this constitutes context settings (Michel et al., 2009). Educators offer problem-based learning through courses that are structured around real-world problems; this is an aspect of learning in context settings. Case learning occurs when students extrapolate knowledge from a case; case learning yields educational benefits in comparison to more traditional lecture/discussion models. In this approach, students take control over their learning process and are actively engaged (Michel et al., 2009). There are four different types of case learning: (a) case studies with texts designed for the case method, (b) those using written nontraditional case materials, (c) those incorporating documentary films as case materials, (d) and problem-based learning approaches (Michel et al., 2009).

Problem-based approaches are highly valuable due to direct application of theory to practice, degree of immersion, and the degree to which students are invested in the case (Krain, 2010). A few of these approaches to active learning and problem-based learning include structured debate, simulations, games, role-play, videoconferencing, and virtual-learning communities, as well as service learning. Instructors offering problem-based learning engage students in a student-centered approach to learning that empowers them to conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills (Krain, 2010). Experiential and active learning generate personal interests in subjects; they raise student excitement and engagement (Krain, 2010).

Active teaching and learning are guided by the principles of case learning. These approaches are pedagogical in their attempt to move lecture-oriented paradigms to new learning paradigms through student-centered approaches that develop critical-thinking skills and constructs of knowledge (Krain, 2010). When students are given the opportunity to select activities taught in the classroom, they experience participative learning. Working in small groups in face-to-face interaction becomes cooperative learning.

It is true that active learning methods require more time in preparation, but students obtain more in the process (Michel et al., 2009). There are certain subjects that lend themselves to active learning, such as the arts, science, and mathematics; nonetheless, even when teaching these subjects, instructors should strive to connect to prior knowledge and make connections with students (Ueckert, 2008). Evidence shows that active learning is effective. Although this study is not concentrating on the sciences, both arts and science subject readily lend themselves to hands-on learning. In both, students learn best by hands-on activities, learning by doing. For example, college faculty members have modified introductory courses to include more active learning strategies, and this has increased success rates (Henry, 2010). There are now introductory college courses that influence successful graduation rates. STEM (science, technology, engineering, and technology) courses have proven effective (Henry, 2010) by incorporating active learning strategies.

In another example of the efficacy of active learning strategies employed in the areas of math and science, in Henry's (2010) study, mathematics and science partnerships

demonstrated that sustained involvement of higher education faculty contributes to improved K-16 student achievement. The National Science Foundation funded a partnership for reform in science and mathematics that included 15 school districts, two 2-year colleges, two state universities, and two research universities. The aim of the study was to explore whether sustained involvement of higher education science and mathematics faculty would contribute to further understanding about teaching and learning science and mathematics. The findings of Henry's (2010) study suggest that many faculties in the math and science areas were not aware of how students learn. Learning communities were designed to provide a way for faculty to examine their classroom practices and share various teaching approaches with their colleagues. Sharing teaching techniques is one way to build actively engaged learners. The implications of the study suggest that faculty need structure and support if the modifications are to be sustained (Henry, 2010). Instructors who utilize these techniques must allot time to try new things and appreciate the value in recognizing student learning. Although Henry's study did not concentrate on the arts, the study has implications for faculty who teach the arts, since their students are also likely to benefit from the same active learning strategies. More research is needed in having faculty who teach the arts learn about these strategies and have the opportunity to witness the effects of these strategies on their students.

Evidence is mixed regarding active teaching and learning in regard to short-term knowledge, whereas collaborative learning involving real-world applications promotes deeper understanding of key concepts (Krain, 2010). Consistently, studies show active

learning enhances students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills and the ability to transfer learning.

Helping faculty implement active learning strategies into their lectures.

Cretu (2014) suggested ways to help university professors begin to implement active learning components into their classrooms. Cretu referred to students in lecture-based classrooms as spectators. Cretu advised faculty members to reconsider their lecture formats and incorporate student-centered learning. Cretu described active engagement as activities such as reading, discussing, applying, and problem solving, which move the learner through the ranks of blooms taxonomy (Cretu, 2014). Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy uses the following to describe the learning process: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. When addressing these steps, an instructor takes the learner from simple memorization to concrete learning.

Cretu (2014) suggested that faculty who are used to teaching through lecture mode begin to implement active learning approaches incrementally. Cretu explained that the process for implementing active learning techniques into the traditional lecture process could be broken down into three distinct sections. The beginning is used to identify gaps in the learning and develop stimulus to evoke prior learning and meanings for new learning (Cretu, 2014). Cretu suggested that faculty begin their classes asking questions that will activate engagement in the learning right away. This is called utilizing an *opening question*, in which the teacher asks questions and gives students an instant to reply. In the middle section, instructors may utilize *semantic mapping*, *free writing*, *anticipation guide*, *think-pair-share*, or *stump your partner*. When the teacher utilizes

free write, Students write everything they know about a given topic in the allotted time. When instructors use semantic mapping, they ask students to writing a word that names the topic in a circle, and ask students to make connections between ideas around the circle (Cretu, 2014). *Anticipation guide* is a list of statements about key concepts that students can read and agree or disagree (Cretu, 2014). With stump your partner; students take a minute to create a challenging question based on the lecture up to that point.

As the lecture ends, instructors should encourage students to recap the lessons to help give them a degree of mastery. At this point, the instructor would use a *lecture quiz* or a *one-minute paper*. With a lecture quiz, the students process information from the lecture and apply it in some manner (Cretu, 2014). In utilizing a one-minute paper, the instructor poses three questions at the end of the class that the students subsequently answer in writing: (a) what are the two most important points from today's lesson? (b) what was the "muddiest" point of the lecture?, and (c) what would make the material clearer to you? The instructor responds to these questions in the next class session (Cretu, 2014). Through this experience, faculty gains knowledge on how to manipulate through uncharted waters, while others may be reluctant to try new ideas or strategies. Encouraging faculty in this systematic process is the best way to embark on change, and in time, materials and classroom configurations will occur. As Cretu noted, "Mastery over a variety of teaching strategies increases possibilities that foster deep learning that value student needs, experience, and learning styles" (p. 171). I will be utilizing these techniques in the seminar and giving participants opportunities to experience them.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

Trumbull (2005) defined culture as “the system of values, beliefs, and ways of knowing that guide communities of people in their daily lives” (p. 35). If faculty members want to be effective at teaching, they need to acknowledge student cultural diversity (Jackson, 2012). They must incorporate students’ backgrounds and experiences into the classroom environment. This is particularly important for student engagement. Culturally responsive teaching uses as its main vehicle students’ backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences. By doing so, instructors are able to develop lesson plans, meet academic requirements, and draw on a select methodology of instruction.

Instructors who draw on students’ backgrounds help them to use previous knowledge to learn, which is fundamental to all learning. Students from diverse racial, ethnic, language, and social class backgrounds all discover more about their own as well as others’ backgrounds, and together discover they have something unique to contribute, which enhances self-esteem and self-efficacy. Gay and Kirkland (2003) noted, “Good culturally relevant teaching and learning honors our diverse cultural and ethnic experiences, contributions, and identities” (p. 131).

Teachers must understand the experiences that students bring into the educational settings and be responsive to diverse cultures by celebrating differences. They need to design learning activities and use materials that are relevant and intrinsically interesting to students from a diversity of backgrounds. Culturally relevant curriculum draws on the strengths of students and engages them in a deeper way, including using performance and art, drawing on all of their aptitudes (Gay, 2000).

Instructors use culturally responsive teaching methods in order to empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically. Teachers who use this approach must keep in mind three criteria, according to Ladson-Billings (1995): students need to develop cultural competency, they need to develop a critical consciousness that challenges the status quo, and they need to be academically successful. Traditional teaching methods and culturally relevant pedagogy are vastly different. Culturally relevant teaching draws on Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences and uses active learning techniques. Traditional methods include passive lecture styles; whereas, culturally relevant pedagogy creates an active engaging environment for learning (Freire, 1996; Murrell, 2002).

Gay (2000) described culturally responsive teaching as having the following characteristics:

- Acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in formal curriculum.
- Uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.
- Teaches students to know and praise their own and each other's' cultural heritages.
- Incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. (p. 29)

Three definitions are used to illustrate culturally relevant teaching. They are (a) the promotion of academic success, (b) development and maintenance of student competence, and, (c) support of a critical and broad consciousness in youth (Houchen, 2013). This is vital when it comes to teaching students of diverse backgrounds. Due to structural inequality, teachers sometimes hold low expectations for the accomplishments of these students (Kunjufu, 2009). Research shows evidence of the structural inequalities and racism faced by African American students seeking educational success (Kunjufu, 2009).

Researchers and policymakers have expended much effort into closing the achievement gap between Blacks and Whites and Hispanics and Whites. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was an initiative introduced in 2002 that was intended to address this gap. The divisions of race and class polarize regions of this country and cause limited familiarity of peoples across race and class boundaries. Past decisions that were made economically and politically have harmed the existing systems and marginalized groups. Historical constructs shape existing disparities that have an impact on demographics, which yield poor outcomes across urban and suburban settings (Hill, 2009). Thus, bringing diverse individuals together to talk about their backgrounds is a way to bring critical consciousness to the students and engage them in learning.

The use of best practices in education is essential for teaching and learning. Low expectations and low outcomes of minority groups and subgroups of students are widespread (Kunjufu, 2009). When linking literacy and culture to create community, there are two premises teachers need to consider: high-quality instruction for often-

excluded groups of students, and instructors learning about the communities these students come from. Culturally relevant teaching strategies help to address the existing historical constructions that trigger economic, residential, and educational racism with and across the periphery (Hill, 2009).

In the culturally responsive teaching environment, maintaining students' cultural identity and heritage is as important as encouraging academic achievement (Gay, 2000). Teachers of African American students would use content that reflects an attitude of high expectations for these students as learners. According to Kunjufu (2009), African American students would become aware of a legacy of high expectations and academic achievement that traditional curriculum fails to address. Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) with African American students describes frameworks, best practices, and methods through a sociocultural lens. "Culturally relevant pedagogy is designed to . . . encourage teachers to ask about the nature of the student-teacher relationship, the curriculum, schooling, and society" (Houchen, 2013, p. 98). Teachers who teach from a culturally responsive framework use principles and techniques that motivate students; these techniques are effective in tapping into their intrinsic understanding, which is a key component of African American students' academic achievement.

Educational programs that are inclusive and culturally relevant tap into ways of knowing, funds of knowledge, language and interests, and allow space for all participants to learn and grow (Colvin, 2013). Service learning allows students to interact with the community, interact with local agencies, and has the potential to improve the learning climate for students. Four service-learning characteristics are active participation,

integrating academic curriculum/ reflection, applying newly acquired skills in real-life situations, and extending student learning beyond the classroom (Colvin, 2013). Service learning is a viable instructional strategy. It can be the impetus for meaningful engagement between students, and the community in which they live. Active engagement in the learning process develops educated citizens (Colvin, 2013). Students gain insight into their education, and it becomes culturally relevant to them by allowing them to make connections between what they learn in the classroom and what is happening in their communities (Colvin, 2013).

John Dewey (1910/1991) suggested that education be defined as “an emancipation and enlargement of experience” (p. 340). In the 1980s, Kolb built on the work of Dewey and others and developed a model for experiential learning with the four stages of concrete experience: observations, reflections, formation of abstract concepts, and generalizations, and then tested the implications of concepts in new situations (Colvin, 2013). Instructors may incorporate volunteerism, fieldwork, and service learning into university curricula, which give students concrete experiences. Instructors engage students in their communities and help them learn the meaning of good citizenship through service-learning projects such as Civil Rights protests and antiwar movements.

Finally, instructors immersed in the concepts of culturally relevant pedagogy utilize reflectivity to provide opportunities for students to reflect on their service to the community so that they are able to better understand themselves and their actions (Colvin, 2013). Higher education needs to include a formal academic curriculum for

service-learning courses. These activities are structured to meet the community's needs and connect service with curriculum. Students may find it difficult to learn "in class" principles when they do not learn how they work in the real world (Colvin, 2013). Due to classroom diversity, educators need to seek ways to be inclusive and see all students as being of value in their classrooms. Culturally relevant pedagogy and experiential learning are good places to begin.

Implications

The UOS can provide an intellectual atmosphere conducive to the stimulation and interchange of ideas. The provisions proposed for assisting faculty members with strategies to improve lesson delivery will hopefully become an ongoing seminar experience for new instructors as well as refresher courses for permanent and adjunct faculty members. It is my hope that the seminar leads to optimal levels of personal performance and accomplishment. Enhancing effective teaching with critical thinking skills, academic rigor, and integration of technology will allow instructors and students to use their abilities to the fullest. New technology and diversity in the higher education workplace may pose different challenges, which will require new skill sets in the form of additional education, as well. It is important to focus on building a culture at HBCUs and other institutions that value and support the achievement of quality teaching and learning outcomes (Southwell, 2010).

In the local setting, 49% of the population consists of nontraditional adult-learners, some of whom have served in the military. The UOS is not unique. The study has implications for other institutions facing similar problems, where faculty members

are accustomed to delivering content through lectures and where students are passive recipients of this knowledge. Research has shown that use of active teaching and learning methods leads to greater retention of knowledge, and that these strategies are more conducive to engaging diverse adult learners. Literature also suggests that student demographics potentially affect student-learning outcomes, which are subdivided into three categories: psychological, behavioral, and benefit outcomes. Changes occur in attitudes, values, self-efficacy, and effort and student belief with active learning techniques (Detlora, 2012).

According to research, university teaching and learning should be an innovative undertaking (Buchen, 2006). It is important that university faculty use action research methods to give students opportunities to enhance their knowledge, critical thinking skills, and success (Cretu, 2014). Engaging students in active participation in classrooms provides an intellectual atmosphere conducive to the stimulation and interchange of ideas. Adult learners need to feel and be successful. To meet these challenges, schools must be transformed in ways that will enable students to acquire critical thinking skills, flexible problem solving, collaboration, and innovative skills they will need to be successful in work and life (Center, 2010).

Summary

Teachers who use the traditional mode of approach are the custodians of the gates of knowledge. They are described as instructors who possess qualities regarding custodial references, who defend their professions, and who often respond with authoritarian personalities and are strict taskmasters. These are teacher-centered

facilitators who filter “unworthy students” out and see themselves as keepers of information and have extremely high standards.

Conversely, there are those teachers who are coaches, a representative of student-centered learning. They possess great enthusiasm and energy and take a deep personal interest in every student. These instructors take students from where they are to where they can go. These instructors nurture, support, encourage, and “push the spirit of learning.” They prepare students for all facets of life. These instructors act as guides, are prepared, know how to help students avoid pitfalls, and lead by example. They are flexible, trustworthy, and competent. In addition, they have a sense of fun, excitement, and have a passion for their subject.

It was hoped that this project would influence the role of education and social change in higher learning. Strategies were presented to faculty members at UOS that were aimed to supply optimal levels of personal performance and accomplishment for instructors involved in the seminar experiences. The next section of this study will describe the qualitative methodology that was used. It will include explanations regarding the choice of research methodology, the methodology rationale and approach, the data collection and analysis, and the researcher’s role in the project study.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore faculty members' perceptions of active learning approaches before and after they implemented these approaches in their classrooms. Another aim was to explore the extent to which these faculty members perceived that these strategies are able to influence student engagement. In this chapter, I present the research design, the research questions, the setting and population, the instruments used to collect data, the data collection procedures, and the method of data analysis.

Research Design and Approach

The term methodology refers to the way researchers find answers to problems that arise. One's interests, goals, aims, and assumptions determine the methodology that a researcher chooses. Qualitative research is a method frequently used to explore cultural issues because the researcher is able to explore socially constructed experiences. The aim of qualitative research is to explore how people understand their reality.

Phenomenology focuses on the lived experiences of an individual and the effect it has on those involved (Creswell, 2012; Dawson & Algozzine, 2006). Case studies rely the *why* and *how* of phenomena (Merriam, 2009). Ethnography is the study of cultures and beliefs (Creswell, 2009). Narrative designs use stories and provide first-person accounts (Creswell, 2012), which also can occur in phenomenological descriptions. Experimental approaches are based on predictions. Critical research affects society as a

whole. Despite the fact that many of these methods can be used concurrently or share some of the same concepts, I used an action research approach.

Teachers use action research in an attempt to solve problems to improve professional practices in their own classrooms through systematic observations and data collection. Use of action research is intended to provide the instructor with the tools for reflection, decision-making, and being more effective in the classroom (Parsons & Brown, 2002). The use of action research allows the practitioner to take a close look at interventions regarding the practitioner's own issues regarding lesson delivery. It also allows faculty to participate and learn other potentially effective modes of teaching (Humphreys, 2013). This methodology combines diagnosis, action, and reflection. When choosing action research as a methodology, six notions are considered: (a) identifying the problem, (b) reflecting on the problem, (c) emancipation, (d) critical theory, (e) professional development, and (f) participatory research. Action research allows participants to work on their own problems, improve practice, collaborate, participate, and engage in problem solving (Bilandzic, 2011).

Using action research that I used in this project study involved the following: (a) a review of current practices, (b) identification of what needs improvement, (c) a review of ways to move forward, (d) an attempt to try new ideas, (e) a way to monitor and reflect on what happens, (f) a way to make modifications if necessary, (g), a way to evaluate what has been modified, and (h) a way to continue the process until satisfied with results (e.g., Bilandzic, 2011). Through engaging in process, participants in an action research design are able to engage in teaching and learning through reflective practice

(Greenwood, 2007). Participants can learn other ways of teaching and reflecting on their own practices. The lecture model still dominates the relationship between professor and student (Greenwood, 2007). Action research was used in this study to explore how new and innovative strategies for instruction may be effective in institutions where instructors use lecturing as their primary methods of teaching in the arts.

The lecture mode of teaching is not producing scholars who can compete in today's job market with students from other countries (Zimpher & Jones, 2011). Most of this pedagogical theory of podium teaching and passive learning from quiet students has to do with tradition, with economy, and faculty time. It is a common practice in universities to save money and economize faculty time by putting learning solely on the shoulders of students, rather than professor-student relationships (Greenwood, 2007). A researcher who uses action research at the university level has the ability to make a significant contribution to confronting issues faced by universities today (Greenwood, 2007). Use of action research helps researchers to formulate problems by involving the stakeholders in a process of identification, evaluation, and finding a solution. So it was with this study.

Using the ex-post facto design, I observed selected faculty members who agreed to participate in this study. I observed their teaching strategies and the extent to which students were engaged in their classrooms. After this observation, a seminar was presented, which demonstrated alternative ways for instructors to organize lessons in higher education to increase student engagement and ensure effective teaching and

learning (Thelin, 2013). In this seminar, active learning strategies were modeled, using the theories of andragogy and multiple intelligences.

Different strategies were presented by the facilitator of the seminar using each subject area represented, encouraging instructors to find other ways to present material to students aside from the dominant form of lecture. Instructors participated in activities, and brainstormed ways to incorporate new strategies into at least one of their classes during the current semester. Instructors were asked to notate the differences in their approach and observe the influence of these strategies on the students in the classroom. After the seminar, faculty members implemented these strategies in at least one of their lecture classes.

I returned to these classes after the strategies had been implemented and observed again, writing down differences I recognized. The goal was to determine if there was an increase in student participation, using an observational guide to help notate student engagement. The faculty members were interviewed about how they perceived these instructional strategies in terms of effectiveness. The faculty members and I came back together to discuss whether the changes were worth the additional time and effort and if they would be willing to try to add these suggestions to additional classes.

Thus, the type of evaluation was both formative and summative. It was formative because as the researcher of the study I was implementing the beginning of a process which hopefully faculty members would continue to apply. It was summative in that this attempt was also partially outcome based; the goal was to have faculty members employ new active learning strategies in their classrooms and observe the effects on the students.

I also observed the effects on student engagement. The process of triangulation corroborates evidence from different individuals and different methods of data collection (Creswell, 2012), was intended to enhance the validity of the study.

Setting and Sample

The participants were university professors in the performing and fine arts. I selected a purposeful sample of approximately six instructors in the performing and fine arts at the participating UOS. The department consists of approximately 70 students, the majority being first generation college students. The instructors represented diverse areas of expertise that included music, art, theatre, and speech, and consisted of tenured, non-tenured faculty, and fixed term faculty members, including men and women.

Instruments

Observational Guide

Researchers who incorporate a methodical approach to observations help to reduce bias in their studies. The researcher first conducted a preobservation interview to review the instructor's plans, goal, strategies, and assessment methods. The most common observation instruments are rating scales, open-ended narratives and checklists. I selected the Direct Observation Instructional Management checklist (DOIM; Colvin, Brigid, Sugai, & Monegan, 2009) that I used to observe the setting, teacher action, and class engagement (see Appendix A). Checklists help to standardize the observation and make it more reliable. Observations offer insight into teacher effectiveness, and 40% of universities now use peer observations (see Appendix A for the DOIM).

Interview

All teachers have a philosophy about why they do what they do. Preobservation questions were centered on their current mode of teaching and their perceptions of active learning strategies (see Appendix B). Class climate is also a factor in active learning, and the teacher's perception regarding entertainment versus content was a viable question prior to observation. At the postinterview, teachers elaborated on their collaborative learning experiences (see Appendix B).

Procedures

Once approved by the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB), I sent an e-mail to the prospective participants asking them whether they would be interested in joining the research study. I then contacted potential participants to determine a convenient location and time for a meeting to apprise them of the nature of the study, their participation, and to ask them to sign consent forms and complete a demographic form of relevant background data. Potential participant were asked permission to observe his or her classroom and preobservations were completed without giving input; these observations were used to serve as a benchmark for the project study. I conducted observations and interviews before the seminar.

In the interview, I asked open-ended questions about participants' individual courses, syllabi, and teaching methodologies. Participants were invited to attend a seminar where they learned active learning strategies that could be easily integrated into their lessons; the seminar was about the usefulness and effectiveness of these strategies. I gave participants time to implement these strategies in their classroom, and then I made a

post observation, specifically looking for the use of new techniques discussed during the seminar and for markers of student engagement, including participation and body language. A second interview with faculty members was then conducted about their experience of learning and implementing these strategies in the classroom. I asked about their perceptions of student engagement and learning as a result of these strategies. All participants were asked the same questions during the interviews in order to look for commonalities. I told participants that they would be able to withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequences to them, and that if they decided to withdraw, their data would not be used, and all data that had been collected from them would be destroyed.

Ethical Treatment

As the researcher of this project, my foremost responsibility was to respect the rights of the participants. To do this, I anticipated any inequity or unethical treatment during the investigation process (Creswell, 2009). Researchers need to guard their contributors by embodying trust with them. The trust begins with close collaborations with the participants, good interpersonal skills, and communication and organizations skills, as well as providing feedback to the collaborators and participants.

During the research process, it was imperative that participants were safe and that no harm would come to them during their input in the study. The promotion of integrity of the research is vital. Research is a public trust; without it the entire project is questionable. I informed participants that their names and other identifying characteristics would be withheld in the report of the results. I also conducted the study

with awareness of, and bracketing of, any biases or personal opinions I might have had regarding the study (Creswell, 2009; Stringer, 2014).

I used precautions to protect and ensure the participants' rights. The professors were sent letters of invitation asking them to participate in the research study. Sections of the invitation included an introduction of the researcher, connections to the specific university, purpose of the study, description of the procedures, risks, benefits, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and possible questions, as well as the contact information of the committee/chairperson.

Role of the Researcher

I worked as a choral director in the junior high/middle school for twenty-eight years before moving to higher education. During that time, I held several positions within the school environment such as, chair of the school improvement team, team leader, mentor for beginning teachers, and district music liaison. I was honored as Teacher of the Year in 1992-93, 2004-05, and 2006-07. Our school overflowed with smart boards, classroom performance systems, laptop carts and iPods through a million dollar technology grant. New teaching strategies and innovations were at our fingertips, and we were encouraged and eager to learn them and share them. With this background, I understood the need for active engagement in the classroom. In addition, I was the recipient of an artistic grant to produce an inspirational CD and then managed the responsibilities that accompanied fulfilling that grant; therefore, I understood the need for documentation and integrity while receiving grant funding. Experience has helped me to

understand the requirements of the administrative role as well as in instructional role and put me in a unique position to perform the action research study.

Data Collection

I collected data on the instructors' approach to teaching and gathered as much data as possible on the student responses to these approaches. I also interviewed the instructors to explore their perceptions of active learning strategies before they attended a seminar exposing them to those strategies. After the seminar about active learning methods and multiple intelligences, I conducted observations and interviews with them to learn more about the effects of the seminar on their teaching styles and perceptions. In line with best practices concerning data collection of qualitative research, I considered these five factors when gathering data: a) identify what must be observed to shed light on answers, b) use an observation guide, c) gain access to the research setting, d) recognize the researchers' personal role and biases related to research, and e) follow ethical and legal requirements regarding research participants (e.g., Dawson & Algozzine, 2006). I also digitally recorded the interviews. By recording, via digital voice recordings, I had the ability to go back for quality assurance, making the data collected more profound and valid.

Qualitative researchers are active in producing the data recorded through questionnaires and interactions. Notes were also made to record any significant exchanges that were observed during the seminar. In qualitative research, data are collected with observations and a few open-ended questions that have been designed for the project study (Creswell, 2012). Interviews were conducted face-to-face. In semi-

structured interviewing, according to (Dawson & Algozzine, 2006) details emerge from open-ended questions, allowing for rich descriptions and varied elements. There is freedom to control pacing and subject matter, as well as follow-ups. Additionally, I utilized follow-up questions or probes, such as “can you tell me more,” as needed to gain clarification or more information.

Action research primarily involves the process of simultaneous data collection and analysis. I therefore continually processed data throughout all phases of data collection. As a summary of the data collection process, using ex-post facto observation, meaning pre- and post-interpretations, I audited selected subjects in their classrooms prior to any workshops or seminars. This information helped to formulate a benchmark assessment of present teaching practices in academic rigor, engagement, and effectiveness.

After preobservation, faculty members attended a seminar illustrating alternative ways for instructors to organize lessons in higher education to increase academic rigor, active engagement, and ensure effective teaching and learning (Thelin, 2013). In the seminars, instructors participated in activities they could later implement in their classrooms.

I conducted postobservational visits to look for the strategies presented in the seminar to see how instructors’ styles of teaching changed, and if student engagement has increased. I interviewed professors individually, asking them to expound on what worked, or did not work, and if they would be willing to adopt the strategies in more than one class. I utilized the process of triangulation, which corroborates evidence from

different methods of data collection, such as observation, interviewing, and notes of exchanges with participants, to add validity to the results (Creswell, 2012).

Data Analysis

I simultaneously collected data and conducted analysis qualitatively (Merriam, 2009). In my analysis, I classified and characterized persons and events. As understanding the information was an ongoing process, I was involved in continuous reflection about the data, especially while interpreting and writing the report (Creswell, 2009; Stringer, 2014). I utilized open coding, which means I was open to any possibilities when coding the data. I assigned codes as a way to construct the three categories of research that include the researcher, participants, and sources outside of study, such as the literature (Merriam, 2009). Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) stated analysis is an inductive process and begins with these basic steps: (a) preparing and organizing data, (b) reviewing and exploring the data (c) coding data into categories, (d) constructing description of people, places and activities, (e) building themes and testing hypotheses, and (f) reporting and interpreting data.

This study involved action research, so I was continuously reflecting on data throughout data collection. I looked at the observational data to understand faculty members' implementation of new strategies and the effect on the class in terms of student engagement. Then I analyzed the interview data.

As a first step in the data analysis process, I transcribed the audio recordings. After transcription of the instructor responses, I began to reduce the data by reading and emphasizing important passages in the interviews. I notated what seemed important,

which required an ability to identify what is significant, “a close reading plus judgment” (Mostyn as cited in Seidman, 1998, p.100). Seidman (1998) stated that “If it catches your attention, mark it. Trust yourself as a reader (p. 101). I grouped passages in the data that were similar. Through a process called *classifying* or *coding*, I ascertained sections that were linked to others and became themes that repeated themselves (Seidman, 1998). As Seidman stated is crucial to data analysis, I approached the data with an open mind. This means that I viewed the responses to interview questions with fresh judgments. I expected vital themes to emerge that reflected the process of the teachers in this study while reflecting on how various methods of instruction influence student engagement. A colleague in the School of Education agreed to be a peer debriefer and is an Associate Dean at the UOS. The peer debriefer looked at the interview data and the themes the researcher had identified in the data to determine if the themes accurately reflected the data. The peer debriefer provided feedback on whether the researcher has mischaracterized any of the data, left anything important out from the results, or failed to account for outliers in the data. Once the themes had been analyzed in conjunction with the pre- and postobservation results, the debriefer also reviewed those results to determine whether they faithfully reflected the data. All identifying information of participants was removed before presenting results of data analysis. Participants were given pseudonyms.

Limitations of Study

In purposeful sampling, limitations regarding findings require consideration. The research was qualitative and therefore findings may be difficult to replicate. The study

included a small sample size of faculty at UOS, which had unique characteristics due to location and demographics. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to the larger population. Nevertheless, as Onwuebuozie and Leech (2007) proposed,

if the goal is not to generalize to a population but to obtain insights into a phenomenon, individuals, or events, as is most often the case in interpretivist studies, then the qualitative researcher purposefully selects individuals, groups, and settings for this phase that increases understanding of phenomena (p. 242)

In this case, I wanted to explore whether faculty who had been exposed to active learning strategies would find these strategies effective and would utilize these strategies in their classrooms. The results of the data collection process were used to refine the seminar to meet the needs of future faculty that may want to attend a seminar on active learning strategies.

Summary

The research consisted of utilizing an action research design to gain a detailed view of the dominant teaching practices of instructors based upon current modes of informational delivery and the introduction of alternative strategies of teaching, which they will then incorporate into their classrooms. Action research is a natural part of teaching and was used to answer the research questions: “What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on faculty member’s perceptions of the effectiveness of these methods on student engagement and learning?” “What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on student engagement after an instructor attempts to incorporate the recently learned material into his or her classroom?”

In action research, teachers are continually observing, collecting data, and changing practices to improve student learning. Action research provides a framework that guides the energies of teachers. I ensured that the participants received informed consent forms, so they would know and understand the purpose and processes of the study, once permissions from the URR and IRB had been obtained. I collected the data through three different rounds of data collection: I conducted a preobservation, workshop/seminar, and a postobservation to triangulate the data to ensure accuracy and credibility of the findings. Once approved by URR and the IRB, I began data collection and analysis concurrently to ensure structure and to delve into new concepts or themes while permissions are granted. Once data collection had been begun, I then began the coding procedures, which enabled me to provide focused attention and work with practical data, reducing anxiety, and the removal of tedious information (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, as the researcher, I protected the data in a secured database and backed it up on an external hard drive, as well as on Dropbox. The completed data collection, analysis, and findings were used to refine and expand the seminar to meet the needs of future instructors who have a need and desire to increase engagement in their students through the use of active learning strategies, which may be more suitable for today's adult learner.

Section 3: Results

Introduction

The ultimate goal of this research project was to create an active learning seminar that would encourage professors of the fine arts in a HBCU to utilize teaching strategies that will engage the 21st century learner. In order to do this, I evaluated a seminar that exposed educators, who utilized primarily lecture in their class rooms, to active teaching strategies. I administered interview questions before and after the seminar and observed classrooms to determine the effects of the seminar on the instructor's teaching and the subsequent engagement of the students. Thus, the evaluation entailed exploring faculty members' perceptions of active learning approaches before and after they tried implementing these approaches in their classrooms.

Another aim was to explore the extent to which these faculty members perceived that these strategies influence student engagement. This chapter includes an introduction to the project, the literature needed to support the full implementation of the project, and the results of the data collection process, beginning with a description of the participants' demographics. Pseudonyms have been used to designate the various participants in order to protect their anonymity.

Description and Goals

The ultimate goal of the study is to develop a vehicle for disseminating the concepts of active learning strategies to teachers who would otherwise rely predominately on lecture. The information that I used in this research came from literature based on andragogy and multiple intelligences. Andragogy theory is based less

on content and more on the process of learning. This process provides meaning in a way that engages learners, which is of utmost importance in adult learning (Michel et al., 2009). The importance of engaging adult learners extends to evaluation processes as well. Because andragogy places more emphasis on process rather than on content, having projects, in which learners can apply their knowledge in collaboration with others, is beneficial when evaluating the learning that took place. The goal of the project was to evaluate and recommend revisions to a seminar designed to expose instructors to active learning strategies. The teachers who took the seminar were encouraged to evaluate students based on their participation in creative projects. Based on the results of the evaluation of teachers' responses to the seminar and strategies in classrooms, the seminar was redesigned into a 2-hour seminar that incorporated some of these experiences. The project, which is the culmination of this study, is included in Appendix A.

Rationale

Due to the increasing competitive demands in both the business world and academia, the most productive classroom experience is needed for today's learner. Therefore, there is a constant search for new and improved teaching methods (Michel et al., 2009). All researchers suppose active learning is superior to passive; however, such superiority has proved difficult to quantify.

After conducting interviews with participants prior to the seminar, as well as observing them in their classrooms, it became apparent that for the majority of participants, lecture was the most comfortable mode of delivery. While two of the participants were using active learning strategies in their classrooms prior to the seminar,

many of the instructors did not have a thorough understanding of active learning strategies and believed they were using them in their classrooms when they were not. Therefore, the majority of the instructors needed exposure to these methods and practice implementing these methods to truly understand their capacity to enhance student learning. The two instructors who were using active learning strategies prior to the study were able to add to what they knew in order to increase student learning and engagement.

Besides introducing teachers to active learning strategies, a seminar that teaches these strategies needs to expose teachers to the concept of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2011), which offers a broader conceptual framework that assists the capacity of instructors to develop and incorporate the new strategies. The concept of multiple intelligences is especially important when there is a diversity of students in the classroom in terms of ethnicity, age, and learning styles.

Diversity has become the most defining aspect of social life in the 21st century global society. This “diversity” in the classroom “mirrors” our world (McFarlane, 2011, p. 8) and is reflected in students from all occupations, representing a diversity of cultures, nationalities, religions, socializations, and backgrounds, not to mention personalities. Major demographic changes are altering the social fabric of America, which is reflected in the culture of today’s students. All learners have multiple intelligences, and students are often gratified when they are able to engage these intelligences when learning. Thus, instructors who are able to draw upon students’ many intelligences are able to engage the student on a deeper level than if they utilized only the two predominant intelligences that are engaged during most lectures: auditory and visual. Thus, the seminar incorporates

Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences so that teachers can begin to understand why active learning strategies are able to engage students on a deep level.

Assisting the instructor in moving from the narrow paths of delivery, such as lecture, to a means of delivery that diverse students readily and intrinsically respond to on a deeper level was one of the challenges found in the study. Gardner (2011) referred to the former mode of instruction as one that stresses memorization, such as from lecture and textbooks, and to the latter as learning by doing, or teaching and learning in the flow of engagement with a project of some kind. In this way, learning can draw upon the multiple intelligences that Gardner recognized as inherent in each individual regardless of background.

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this literature review was to support the idea of developing and refining a seminar that exposes instructors, who rely predominately on lecture, to active learning strategies. Thus the literature that I reviewed in this section is the most current literature available on active learning strategies.

Need for Engagement

When educators are asked about student achievement and engagement, they admit it is complex and can be complicated. Many times professors attribute their lack of engagement and lack of learning to the student's dislike of the course. However, most professors admit the issue is much deeper than this (Brophy, 2004). One of the components that instructors must recognize is how to find the correct pedagogy (pedagogy used here in its broader sense) for improving engagement. This occurs by

listening, concentrating, thinking, and practicing, and developing strategies that will engage one's students (Bohan, 2013).

When instructors ask students about their beliefs regarding their learning, their focus is basically on increasing knowledge and mastery of course material. These instructors may not have as many strategies in place to help the learner be successful, to respond appropriately to the efforts of learners, or to react when their students fail to learn (Stump, Husman, & Corby 2014).

Inductive learning leads to greater understanding of scientific concepts as well as a greater ability to apply these concepts. Educators should strive for not only proficiency in their students but for critical thinking as well. Simply learning content will not be enough if the learner is to be competent to compete in the workplace; students must continue to strive to acquire the ability to apply these skills in real world situations (Kapetanis, 2011).

Lifelong learning has become a mantra that most educators agree with. Students return to continue their education for a variety of reasons; they may be furthering their education in a specific discipline, broadening their education, learning a new career because the one they were in no longer is necessary to an evolving society, or they may be returning from the military or retired and ready to develop new skills in a vocation they are passionate about. Thus, students are returning to institutions of learning often with a great deal of experience. Their learning is best achieved when they have opportunities to apply what they know in new areas and endeavors (Michel et al., 2009).

Lectures are necessary at some point, but deeper knowledge is required. Lectures emphasize theory, but active learning uses well-structured lectures (Rissasen, 2014). A well-structured lecture involves using the lecture, but limits the lecture to one major topic; in addition, and more importantly, using well-structured lectures involves making connections to prior learning and taking time out for discussion. In addition, the knowledge gained from these lectures must be applied in projects that engage students and increase their learning.

Need for Active Learning Strategies

Higher education is changing slowly to the use of interactive teaching methods and scientific language. There is a need for instructors to be more available to communicate with students, possess a diversity of methods and evaluation techniques, and most of all develop a transparent evaluation process (Domilescu, 2011).

Transparency in the evaluation process refers to a process in which students are evaluated based on criteria that are easily observed; it often involves the application of their learning to a case or a project. This type of evaluation process allows the instructor as well as the student to be able to gauge the learning that has taken place.

Effective communication is an important component in active listening skills. Active listening has been described as “a multistep process, including making empathetic comments, asking appropriate questions, and paraphrasing and summarizing, for the purposes of verification” (McNaughton, Hamlin, McCarthy, Head-Reeves, & Schreiner, 2007, p. 244). These active listening skills are as important to learning as any other kinds of engagement with content. Students must be able to develop a clear understanding and

discernment regarding the speaker's intent (2007), which is part of achieving critical thinking.

Critical thinking can be achieved through collaborative learning activities, such as case studies and projects. Collaborative learning is based on social interdependence theory, in which learning and critical thinking occur through mutual construction of students' knowledge and their ability to share their understanding of that knowledge with one another (Lawrie et al., 2014). Such collaborative learning fosters engagement and enhances communication. Students learn to think critically when they need to share their views and perceptions and are sometimes challenged in those views (Lawrie et al., 2014). Students are then able to change and reconfigure knowledge and then enhance their capacities to transform their knowledge from intangible concepts to intellectual knowledge. This is referred to conceptual change theory (Khoury-Bowens, 2011).

Active learning transforms private learning to public learning. When active learning strategies are incorporated into a classroom, learning becomes a shared process where interaction with others helps an individual to be successful. When students are actively engaged, they are better able to apply the knowledge they have gained. This is almost always certain to occur when instructors are aware of the learning styles of their students, are aware of the role of multiple intelligences in student engagement, and are sensitive to culturally relevant teaching and learning. This has been referred to as helping students transition from the learning of simple knowledge to the realization of their capacity to apply that knowledge to achieve outcomes (Gleason, Peeters, & Resman-Targoff, 2011).

Specific Active Learning Strategies

The main target of active learning strategies is to move from teaching to learning. This means that more emphasis needs to be placed on how students learn best, as opposed to the amount of content that can be delivered. In order to achieve this goal, instructors must become collaborators of students' learning, become involved in the process, and be assured that learning is taking place (Caliga, 2014). Active learning practices include interactive discussion and conducting assessments. These assessments may be informative or formative and contribute to enhanced student outcomes (Pierce, 2013).

Two specific strategies that instructors may use to increase student engagement are roleplaying and interactive design. Studies have found that roleplaying and interactive design increase students' understanding of real life scenarios. With roleplaying, students adopt a role physically and psychologically; they assume a character role in a constructed scene with or without props. Teachers have students role-play in order to allow them to broaden their experience by taking up with another person's perspective, feelings, and behavior. Roleplaying has been utilized to understand characters of stories, literature, or a rival's point of view.

In both roleplaying and interactive design, students are presented with actual scenarios that allow them to problem-solve real life experiences. The roles provide structure regardless of student's self-efficacy and allow students to be in the moment and experience different perspectives of a problem or relationship. This framework is story based and maximizes engagement; learning through roleplaying has been utilized in

several other disciplines, including English literature, Psychology, and History (Dracap, 2012).

Concept mapping is another strategy that enhances retention. Concept mapping helps students comprehend complex ideas through visually illustrating the relationships between them. In a recent study, concept mapping was used with tablet technology in an active learning classroom, as a way to engage students in linking short narratives with current events (Gerard, Knott, & Lederman, 2012). The course utilized “knowledge construction using content typical to discussions in a course on business strategy” (Gerard et al., 2012, p. 97). From short narratives, students began creating illustrations and the instructors began linking them, showing how they were connected. The drawings were shrunk in order to make room for other students to put their ideas into the concept map. The teachers illustrated how the concepts were related by moving the drawings around and enlarging them, using a digital pen. The authors admitted that this was similar to placing “post-its” on a board, but Gerard et al. (2012) believed “the manipulation of visual media permitted more than just the important capture of socially created knowledge” (p. 97). The instructors were able to “track a discussion’s genesis, changes in focus, identification of tangents, and important extensions that could be difficult to follow and recall” (Gerard et al., 2012, p. 97).

Many professors complain about freshman failing to read assignments and having an inability to analyze what has been read. One way to incorporate active learning strategies with lecture is as follows: After a large lecture classes is offered, conduct a series of small group session follow-ups, including discussion and activities, such as

think/pair/share, that help to reinforce themes that were covered during the lecture (Ellogy & Mostafa, 2010). Think/pair/share is an activity that involves having students pair up and talk about what was covered, or problem solve a particular point, and then share with the group. Many think group activities are active learning, but there is a need for the correct combination of features. The activities must build on one another so that learning takes place. Activities should involve making connections to prior learning and taking time out for discussion, perhaps utilizing think/pair/share.

Use of Technology

Keeping abreast of technological advances are paramount as well. These technological advances can be problematic if there is no proper training (McLeod, Waites, Pittard, & Pickens, 2012). It is the professor's responsibility to ensure student engagement and expectations are met when utilizing technology (Powell, Cleveland, Thompson, & Forde, 2012) Multi-instructional teaching and technology generate active learning today. Most students have some type of tablet or iPad. These technologies can maintain and augment active learning. Instructors may not be proficient in the use of tablets or iPads do not always appreciate being moved from their comfort zones; nonetheless, tablet technology allows for flexibility to promote active learning (Gerard, 2012).

Active Learning Strategies and the Performing Arts

Many perceive the performing arts as a way for students to showcase their talents; however, the curricula are also focused on developing critical thinking and leadership skills. The arts are challenging to learn and to teach and include gathering, analyzing,

and synthesizing information through collaboration. The goal of the arts educator is to find creative ways that students can achieve a greater understanding. For example, once students understand a piece of music, a creative dance movement, a new graphic program or a soliloquy, they then must be able to apply this knowledge to their specific artistic form. During the rehearsal/practice process in all areas, students are asked to analyze their performances and often create new ways for presentation, allowing them to synthesize and ultimately reach the level of evaluation by performing a solid program or create a successful advertising promotion.

When learning is effective it entails students' acquiring new knowledge, being engaged in learning, and being sparked with curiosity towards the subject being taught. With active learning strategies, educators can create situations where these aspects of learning happen spontaneously.

Getting instructors to be open to active learning strategies as opposed to lecture is going to require some professional development. The 21st century educator's role is shifting and active learning and student-centered strategies should now be at the center of how they teach.

Implementation

The implementation of the project involves a thorough examination of the evaluation of the seminar to understand what worked and what did not.

Potential Barriers

Potential barriers towards full implementation of this project include the willingness of the schools to host the seminar and the teachers to attend. However, many

teachers, like those who participated in the evaluation process of this project, would welcome the opportunity to learn new strategies that might be useful in engaging their students.

Roles and Responsibilities of Researcher

It was my responsibility, as a researcher, to dispense and gather the surveys, moderate and extend an invitation to the seminar presented by Dr. Noran Moffett, Associate Dean of the School of Education. As the researcher, I conducted pre and postinterview sessions, as well as pre- and post-classroom observations. It was also my responsibility to secure the venue and assure the atmosphere was conducive for all those who chose to participate. I also played a role in helping the participants problem-solve ways to implement these strategies in their classrooms given their subject matter and resources.

Project Evaluation

Demographic Characteristics of Sample

The participant's ages ranged from 36 to 65 years. Four were tenured, one was on tenure track, and one was a lecturer at the time of the study. Three females and three males participated. Ethnicities represented were African American, Black, Caucasian, Hispanic, and Indian/Caucasian. See Table 1 for the demographic characteristics of the sample. The names that are used for participants are pseudonyms.

Table 1

Participants' Demographic Characteristics

Part.	Class taught	Rank	Gender	Ethnic ID	Highest degree attained	Yrs. teach. fine arts	Yrs at UOS	Tenured	Tenure track
Prof. Brown	Digital Art	Prof	M	White/Indian	MFA	17	12	Yes	Yes
AP Jenkins	Humanities/Ceramics/Art	AP	F	Hisp.	MFA	18	15	Yes	Yes
AP Tibido	Dance	AP	F	AA	MFA. MS	6	7	Yes	Yes
Lect. Jones	Band/Music App.	Lect	M	AA	MA	7	.25	No	No
Prof. Monroe	Theatre/Speech	Prof	F	Cauc.	MFA	24	15	Yes	No
AP Lark	Art/Painting	Asst Prof	M	Black	MFA	8	8	No	Yes

Note. Part. = participant; prof = professor, AP = associate professor; lect = lecturer; Asst = assistant; Hisp. = Hispanic; Cauc. = Caucasian; Yrs. = years; UOS = University of Study.

Although one criterion for inclusion in the study was being registered for a seminar on active learning strategies conducted by UOS, one participant did not attend the seminar. Assistant Professor Jenkins, who was teaching a drawing class at the time of the study, was not able to attend. However, I was able to support her on implementing an active learning strategy and the results of that are reported below.

Research Questions

The following two research questions were used as guides for this study.

1. What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on faculty members' perceptions of the effectiveness of these methods on student engagement and learning?
2. What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on student engagement after an instructor attempts to incorporate the recently learned material into his or her classroom?

Research Question 1. To answer the first research question, the themes and pre- and postobservations will be presented. As each participant was teaching a different class, it is important to elaborate on what they were doing before and after the seminar and what each thought independently of another about active learning strategies. Each seemed to have his or her own definition of these strategies. Each figured out a way to apply them post seminar to their unique classes. Each will be presented first individually to show what they used before and after. Mainly, this section includes the observations before and after the seminar. These observations are best reported individually; however a table also is presented which shows the results of pre and postobservations. The way they evaluated their classes will also be presented here, because each one gave a unique answer to how they evaluated their classes. Following the participant observational profiles, the themes of their perceptions about active learning strategies and what they believed they were doing in their classrooms are presented.

Participant observations. The following is a synopsis of the observations and some portions of individual interviews to create a context in which each participant learned about and applied active learning strategies. As each participant was teaching a

different class, it is important to elaborate on what they were doing before and after the seminar and what each thought independently of another about active learning strategies. Each seemed to have his or her own definition of these strategies. Each figured out a way to apply them post seminar to their unique classes. Because of the differences in definitions especially prior to the seminar, it is important to understand through the observations what the participants were actually doing in their classrooms.

Participant Brown. Participant Brown taught digital art. When asked about teaching strategies, he replied that he did instructional and “hands on” teaching. In terms of evaluation strategies, these concerned contemplating what he decides the learning goals should be and evaluating on a 5-point scale, with 3 being proficient.

This professor believed he was already incorporating active learning strategies into his classroom. He said that he had learned to use them teaching K-5, a time when it is really important to engage students. He considered that lecture and response was the “usual method” of approach and that he thought that for arts “things are better through the doing.” He also mentioned that “the arts tend to attract nontraditional learners.” He therefore decided to move away “from lecturing and having them remember and regurgitate.” He said, “I lecture on Mondays, Wednesdays my students just come in to work and I come in to help and facilitate.” He did say that in the beginning of class there may be times when the class is too disruptive to handle active learning strategies, and in these cases, he would switch to a more traditional style until classroom management is no longer an issue. He said that instance had not occurred yet.

Preobservation. The setting is a commercial art class consisting of 12 students, ranging from freshman to sophomores. The classroom is in the Fine Arts Building, in the art studio with computers. The class is in the field of Commercial Arts and Advertising. All the instruction is focused on graphic design and illustration.

Professor Brown facilitated learning alongside students via computer with 75-80% of all students on task. The instruction dealt with graphic skills to assist in self-marketing, advertising techniques, computer generated images, and technology (computers and software). The focus was going to be a special studio graphic image, but the exact product had not been decided upon in this observation session.

Professor Brown used direction, as he presented information on what the students were required to do, or he made a specific request related to the lesson or activity. A few students needed further explanation regarding the project; the instructor was very responsive in complying and answering the student's questions. Reviewing occurred approximately 12 minutes before the end of the 50-minute class. Supervision during the observation consisted of mainly facilitating; the class was student centered despite the fact this was the beginning of a new project.

In my estimation, the teacher was using active learning strategies in spite of not having attended the seminar. In addition, the learning strategies he was utilizing were not taught in the seminar. In keeping with the beliefs he expressed in the interview, he appeared to be utilizing active learning strategies.

Postobservation. The commercial project that students developed was a Happy Meal Box. The concept was advertising. The instructor incorporated active learning

strategies that were student centered. Despite the fact all students were focused on the physical product, all computer generated material was presented in a three-dimensional way. The instructor only lectured on Mondays, which gave students the leisure to experiment with the activity presented to them on Wednesdays and Fridays. The teacher primarily facilitated on the latter two days. Students discussed amongst themselves the concepts of branding, promoting their content, needs for advertising, and even envisioning the initial class assignment. The teacher was able to move the students entirely through Bloom's taxonomy (Cretu, 2014) to the end result. As mentioned previously, Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy uses knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Some of the final results of the Happy Meal Box became the Blitz Box, Bronco Box, and Halloween Box to name a few. The assignment consisted of students reading nine chapters of information on their own. Only six of the 12 students were nearing completion of the project at the time of this observation. Professor Brown was employing active learning strategies that were taught during the seminar. He was making good use of technology (computers and software).

Participant Jenkins. Assistant Professor Jenkins was teaching Humanities/Ceramics/Art at the time of the study. She said that she used "rubrics to look at post and predevelopment" for her evaluation strategies. She said she also used a "pre-test and weigh that with post-test." She added that she has a format for students to do self-evaluation and a format "for group evaluation where I set up teams and they look at each other's work. I also bring in colleagues to look at work, so [there are] a variety of methods." She said that active learning strategies were her preferred method of teaching.

Preobservation. This class was comprised of nine students, ranging from freshman to sophomores. The class was held in a classroom situated in the Fine Arts Building, downstairs in the arts section, which is used primarily for drawing and painting. The basic context and principles are for free hand drawing. The emphasis is on the elements and principles of art through self-expression and a variety of drawing media. There was no use of technology.

Assistant Professor Jenkins did not describe the content related to the lesson. The lesson was ultimately to be free drawing. Despite the fact this was a basic drawing class, most of these students possessed the required skills for drawing. They had the necessary tools, that is, they had the paper, pencils, erasers that were needed for the project the professor is discussing. Assistant professor Jenkins did not ask if there were any questions, and the students did not raise their hands to inquire in the first 23 minutes of the class. Finally, Assistant professor Jenkins asked an isolated question involving a single answer where one student responded and then the teacher continued. Supervision occurred 40 minutes into the lesson as the students began to draw and the teacher moved around the room monitoring each one. It was the estimation of this researcher that active learning strategies were not being implemented during this observation.

Postobservation. It should be noted that Assistant Professor Jenkins did not attend the seminar. I asked whether she would be willing to video her instructions for their upcoming project as a means of using an active learning strategy, and she agreed. Students were given a design of several silver (metal) objects in a configuration. In the video, they had to use their thumb for measurement, close one eye for measurement and

look for a 1:2 ratio, 1:3 ratio, or 1:5 ratio in measurement. They had to look for rectangles, circles, and edges of the contour. Students were able to go back to this video at any time and review these directions if they became confused for any reason. During the observation, the room was partially dark, with light on the object in the center of the room as students were seated in a circle around it. Assistant Professor Jenkins reminded them to look for foreground, middle ground, and background. These three were not part of the video directions. There was one student who was not prepared; nonetheless, the instructor addressed the student away from all others, so as to not distract from the other students' focus. Assistant Professor Jenkins seemed to like the idea of the video directions. Repetition is something students dislike and having the video available to each student cut down on the necessity of repeating instructions for a few. The students were able to review the video on their smartphone and upload.

Participant Tibido. Assistant Professor Tibido was teaching dance at the time of the study. When speaking of her evaluation strategies, she said that she used “rubrics” but “only for background.” She said, “I’m looking for growth, so if you have, say you have a plié, which is sort of just bending your knees, is your back correct?” She added, “So that’s the one thing I start with, but then can you self-correct? That’s the big thing the dancers have to do.” Assistant Professor Tibido also believed she was using active learning strategies in her classroom. She said, “That’s what the arts is. . . . I don’t know how you cannot do that, I mean, not to be funny but what is the non-active learning strategy?” She added, “Even if you are lecturing and you ask them do you get it? Even if they do not, that’s active, so.”

Preobservation. This class was comprised of 20 students, ranging from freshman to seniors. The classroom was situated in the dance studio, which is housed in the Physical Education complex with mirrors on 3 of the 4 walls. This class was a beginning survey and participatory dance class that explored jazz, ballet, modern, and cultural dance styles. The main focus of this dance teacher was using the body as an instrument for creative expression, physical activity, basic preparation, and training. Students learned the differences between dance styles. The aim was to also help them develop an appreciation for the art of dance. The only technology used in the class was a CD player.

During the observation, the instructor modeled, gave directions, and allowed students to ask questions. At least 90% of the student's participated without coercion. They seemed to enjoy this instructor and the class appeared to be very student-centered. Active strategies of collaborative learning were observed to already be in effect. There was positive feedback and a very healthy environment for student productivity.

Post observation. Assistant Professor Tibido appeared to have done an exceptional job of creating an environment of active engagement and learning. Students with little or no dance training were learning choreography, they were responsible for their learning, and most of all, and this was a student-centered classroom. The focus was on African dance and the instructor was videotaping, moving about the classroom, instructing, self-correcting, multitasking, and encouraging dancers with more expertise to continue helping others. Students were then separated into two different groups. One group was sent out of the room, while others remained. The room had mirrors in front and on the sides. Immediate correction was given. This was mastery learning. The only

technology was a CD player and a video camera that I was certain would be used as a tool once rehearsal was over. It was obvious to the researcher that there were some students who had difficulty with the polyrhythmic beats of the music and the steps that had been created; however, the instructor's words were uplifting and not condescending, so no one quit. Instead, the dancers continued to press forward. There was much work left with this dance, but this instructor seemed to understand the importance of a student-centered environment and the students were evidently encouraged and desired to continue.

Participant Jones. Lecturer Jones lectured in band and music appreciation at the time of the study. He said that even though he was aware that "traditionally teachers like to give paper exams," he said that "I like to mix it up. I'll do a paper exam here and there, now and then we'll do some type of verbal it's on the tip of my tongue." He said that he would "ask questions after class, things like that, verbally give answers." He also said that he would sometimes "put them in groups and things like that and they be creative." He said that he liked the idea of active learning strategies because to him that meant different ways of teaching.

Preobservation. This class was comprised of 48 students, ranging from freshman to seniors. It also consisted of a variety of majors and minors. According to the initial syllabus, the strategy was lecture and class consisted solely of listening sessions. The description of the course was a survey of the development of music from antiquity through the 21st century. The aim was to reflect the evolution and growth of music, historical context, and characteristics.

Lecturer Jones failed to check the technology in the classroom prior to his class, and he could not get it working properly. Twenty minutes of valuable class time was spent trying to get the computer and LCD working, as opposed to moving on with the students. They were bored, played on their cell phones, and talked. He finally started the class without the technology but had a difficult time getting the students focused again. Nonetheless, he still discussed the project they were responsible for, along with some vocabulary and expectations.

Postobservation. After the seminar, Lecturer Jones decided to give students a wonderful growth activity. Students were divided and each was given a musical genre to research. They went to the library and came back to present their findings in any creative way possible. One very interesting presentation was “The Choir Anniversary.” Their topic was Gospel Music Artists. Specifically, these artists included Shirley Caesar, Tamela Mann, The Mighty Clouds of Joy, and Kirk Franklin. Their presentations were complete with a Prezi presentations; a Prezi presentation is a computer-generated whiteboard that enables people to see, understand, and remember ideas by making monologues into conversations. Students had a talk-back session, and it was clear that they really enjoyed that. With a class of 48, each tried to compete with each other for the most outstanding presentation. No one was allowed to do the same genre. There were six groups, with eight students in a group. It was active learning and engagement at its highest, especially for higher education. These were not music majors, and this was an elective class. Students were engaged and responsible for their learning. Lecturer Jones said he would consider repeating this activity in the future.

Participant Monroe. Professor Monroe taught theater and speech at the time of the study. She said that some of her classes were lecture classes but “I don’t really like to lecture so I tend to lecture for a small amount of time and then we discuss what I’ve lectured on.” Professor Monroe said as far as her evaluation strategies were concerned she had a loose standard:

I have a loose standard for the class and I say loose because not every student advances as quickly as the next student so I really tend to grade primarily on growth and willingness to experiment, particularly in performance classes and whether or not they got their basic tenets they need to get in order to improve and be a better performer. So I can’t really grade everybody by the same set standard, but that standard is there in the back of my mind how I assess them and how well they improve going toward that standard.

Preobservation. This class was comprised of five students, ranging from freshman to sophomores. The classroom was situated in the School of Education building despite the fact it was an arts class. It was in what is considered a smart room, which consists of computer, monitor, and audio/visual aids. The course was designed to introduce students to the literary study of world drama, with particular emphasis on gender and culture. Selected plays from various regions of the world are read (in English translation), with an emphasis on understanding how drama expresses and challenges values, ideas, and traditions of a given culture.

During preobservation, less than 50% of the students were interested in what was taking place in this class. Professor Monroe admitted that the students were bored with

her and that she was having difficulty making this class interesting. It was a newly designed class. Her idea of engagement was to have the students read the material and present it. There was not any teacher-student interaction. It was all teacher-centered, and she never moved from the front of the classroom.

Postobservation. After the seminar, the students were analyzing “A Raisin in the Sun.” Professor Monroe sought ways to discuss the vocabulary differently. This class admittedly was challenging in terms of incorporating active learning strategies, as there were only six students. Professor Monroe was well aware that the students were bored. I suggested a “One minute paper” for students to complete, with questions or statements that they did not understand regarding the terms “assimilationist,” “Prometheus,” and “a dream deferred.” These suggestions did help bring some interaction to the class, so the instructor offered a group exam and thought about having assistance with think/pair/share and how it could work. Think/pair/share gives students a structure for thinking on a specific topic individually, and then they share their ideas with a peer. The learning promotes participation by encouraging a high degree of active engagement as opposed to recitation and question and answer. Professor Monroe admits it will take them time to “think out of the box” but said she is willing to try.

Participant Lark. Assistant Professor Lark was an assistant professor in Art and Painting at the time of the study. He described his current strategies as, “Lecture, student participation, YouTube videos, Internet, and artist.” In terms of his evaluation strategies, Assistant Professor Lark stated the following:

Most of my classes, my Art History is on a point system where . . . everything that they do in the class has a number of points that go with it and then all just accumulate all the points. I let them know at the beginning of class, and I'm talking about art history basically, that's my lecture course, I let them know in my syllabus at the beginning what they're responsible for. I list everything that they're responsible for, and I give them examples of how the point system works and how they can accumulate the number of points the maximum points they can do.

Assistant Professor Lark went on to say that he tells students, especially those students seeming to having difficulties with the exam, "My art history [classes] are not easy . . . because I require a lot of documentation, a lot of memorization a lot of information." In addition, he lets them know that "They need to do a lot of critical thinking to analyze and assess different art movements and why they developed." He said that they are given opportunities to earn extra credit "at the end of the semester which can then raise their grade."

Preobservation. This class was comprised of 12 students, ranging from freshman to sophomores. The classroom is in the Fine Arts building; it is a smart classroom consisting of computer, screens, and audio/visual. The basic context is Art History and art form developments in various cultures. The class includes the history of architecture, sculpture, painting, and minor arts. At the time of the preobservation, the students were beginning their discussion of Byzantine Art History. Vocabulary of this era appeared to be difficult for these students to grasp. The students were using a textbook and needed to

lift this information from this medium. There was no power point available with specific information available to them. Assistant Professor Lark lectured, and the students were expected to take notes from his lecture and write what they deem important.

Postobservation. Christianity can be a daunting subject in a public university. It proved it could be for this instructor. As he looked for active ways to discuss the Byzantine Era in Art History, he decided on discussion boards in Blackboard and a top 10 list. Assistant Professor Lark also used You Tube videos that reinforced what was in the text, as opposed to the dry clips that went with the text. The students found these more entertaining, and they were able to retain more of the information. This feature stirred healthy debate and, as long as the students were reminded that opinions were simply their own points of view, the instructor could stand the banter. I do not know if Assistant Professor Lark will continue with the strategies. He may do so sparingly. The class did ask about a class Twitter page, so that if they came across something they did not understand they could tweet. In my opinion, this may be out of the comfort zone of Assistant Professor Lark, but we will have to see. See Table 2 for the pre- and postobservational results.

Table 2

Pre- and Post-Seminar Observations Regarding Use of Active Learning Strategies and Student Engagement

Partici- pant	Subject	Pre-seminar observation			Post-seminar observation			
		Setting (e.g., whole class, small, group, Ind.)	Active learning strategies yes or no	Active learning strategies taught in seminar yes or no	% of student engaged M, H, L	Setting (e.g., whole class, small, group)	Active learning strategies taught in seminar yes or no	% of student engaged M, H, L
Prof. Brown	Digital Art	W	Y	N	M	W/S	Y	M
AP Jenkins	Humanities/ Ceramics/ Art	W	N	N	H	W	Y	H
AP Tibido	Dance	W/S/T	N	N	M	W/S/T	Y	M
Lect. Jones	Band/Music App.	W	N	N	L	W/S	Y	M
Prof. Monroe	Theatre/ Speech	W	N	N	L	W	Y	H
AP Lark	Art/Painting	W	N	N	H	W	Y	H

Note. W= whole class; S = small group and independent work; I = independent work whole class; T = transition; Y = yes; N = no; M = most or more than 75%; H = half or 50%; L = less than 50% .

Category: Pre-seminar interview. The two main categories of themes are “Pre-seminar interview” and “Post-seminar interview.” Each category has several main themes and subthemes. This category has three larger themes and several subthemes. The themes are *Perceptions of current strategies*, *Perception of active learning strategies*, and *Perceptions that current strategies are active learning strategies*.

Theme: Perceptions of current strategies. This theme has two subthemes: General perceptions of current strategies and *Effect on student engagement*

Subtheme: General perceptions of current strategies. Six participants, Brown, Jenkins, Tibido, Jones, Monroe and Lark spoke about their overall perceptions of the strategies they were using pre-seminar. Professor Monroe gave the general impression that she was struggling to find strategies other than lecture to engage his students. She stated, “Some . . . are lecture classes but I don’t really like to lecture so I tend to lecture for a small amount of time and then we discuss what I’ve lectured on.” She added

I think they get bored sometimes with me, and that’s always a concern.

Especially in this new contemporary world drama, we’re looking at plays from other countries that the biggest things I’d like them to get out of this is that not everybody does. (Professor Monroe)

Assistant Professor Lark specified that he mainly used “lecture, student participation, YouTube videos, Internet, and artists.” Assistant Professor Tibido stated the following about her current strategy:

I’m big on realism and I’ve been taught essentialism but when you teach dance, you know you’re looking for the right move then you have the creative part so though I’m pretty structured with realism ten I go into essentialism which is the creative component.

Lecturer Jones indicated the following about his current teaching methods:

Lot of times when I’m teaching I like to use the group method, you know the each one teach one method as well, every student go their own learning ways of learning things, and me being an individual teacher sometimes it would be hard to reach out the different learning styles so I like to do the each one teach one.

Professor Brown indicated that he lectured on Mondays and Wednesdays were different: “I have referred to my teaching style as the dancing bear because there is a certain amount of the fact that it is not straight lecture. I lecture on Mondays, Wednesdays my students just come in to work and I come in to help and facilitate.” Finally, Associate Professor Jenkins stated the following regarding her teaching strategies:

My strategies are always grounded in lecture, but for the last 15 years I’ve been trying to be more engaging with students in community and applying in the classroom as well as out of the classroom, so there is a kind of awareness of what’s going.

Subtheme: Effect on student engagement. Tibido, Monroe, and Lark talked about the effect they believed their strategies had on student engagement. Professor Monroe stated, “I don’t think it affects it at all cause the majority of the time because of my personality the methods that I use students actually enjoy. If the students think it’s fun, they’re going to do it.” Assistant Professor Lark considered the following, “Well my end of the year assessments is always very good. They students say they really like the way I teach. My instructional methods are sometimes having theatre, part comedy, part a whole bunch of stuff.” Assistant Professor Tibido stated the following regarding the effect of her strategies on student engagement:

Positive effect, I’m sort of deducing that word effect because it’s working but I think it’s just me teaching this I think sometimes it gets too much into my personality and they try to think what I’m thinking verses the material, so it would

be nice to have someone else rather than just me because then it becomes like what's mom thinking instead of what should I be doing,

Professor Brown referred to his evaluations as he responded to his effect on student engagement.

My teacher evaluations have always been really good as I teach in a way I can learn because I am the nontraditional student. I didn't do well in lecture classes. I spent a lot of time in isolation in elementary school in learning disability classes so when I got into the higher grades I was able to work on things even with under classes, Latin, rather than do the lectures, I did a lot of murals, projects, that's how I kind of made it to through those classes.

Theme: Perceptions of active learning strategies. There were two subthemes: *challenges* and *Positive perceptions of active learning strategies*.

Subtheme: Challenges. The subcategories of the challenges were *Time and energy*, *Not covering enough material*, and *Other challenges*.

Subcategory: Challenges: Time and energy. Professor Monroe stated the following regarding the perception that time and energy were challenges in utilizing active learning strategies in the classroom:

You have to look at everything you're doing before in a whole new way. How can I flip all of this around and come up with ways to approach the material [that] the students can grasp and they do the instruction instead of me? So it does take time and that's a high [cost].

Assistant Professor Jenkins talked about the challenges of spending the time and energy working with a community partner so that her students could engage in service learning: “It is exhausting to work with a community partner. That does take time out of my office paperwork, out of my advising for the next semester, committees but it’s worthwhile.” Although Professor Monroe seemed to recognize the advantages of utilizing active learning strategies, she stated she might

Fall back on what is comfortable or what I already know rather than try to take the time and the energy to think up these new strategies, new assignments to fit with the strategies. I mean it does take time, even if you take assignments you already.

Subcategory: Challenges: Not covering enough material. Five participants made statements indicating that they considered that one of the challenges of using active learning approaches was not covering enough material. Professor Monroe stated

I’m always afraid . . . of not covering enough material. [but] I think somewhere particularly in the [last] 5 to 6 years I stopped worrying about whether we covered everything that my mind told me we needed to cover as long as we covered the basic.

Lecturer Jones agreed “Sometimes, sometimes especially a class like music appreciation, I can get in-depth in the lesson but it will take up [time].” Assistant Professor Lark contended that for his subject he needed to use lecture methods: “With art histories it’s all about, it is about the lecture because it’s about the information that they need to know and it’s also about the fact that the students are not going to read the book.”

Professor Brown worried about covering material due to the variation in students' ability from the start:

I get people that come in with a great understanding of what we're doing already and so they are way ahead and then I have a large portion of students that have never had an opportunity to work on computers from questionable backgrounds, finances.

Assistant Professor Tibido also spoke about the difficulties students with varying backgrounds presented when it came to covering enough material:

In the classroom you have your lesson plan and you see someone isn't up to par you see that they don't know the foundation of part 3 so you can't go to part 4 you gotta go back and give them part 3 so getting through all the material, we get . . . [set back].

Subtheme: Challenges: Other challenges. Regarding other challenges of active leaning strategies, participants talked about paper work, the challenges of classroom management, and working with a community partner with service learning. Professor Tibido's response to active learning strategies was as follows:

Paperwork, I mean, just book tests, if you I'm giving, doing a test, I'm giving an essay just because I want their opinion. I'm big on the creative end and what are you doing with your knowledge and how are you applying your knowledge, how are you understood?

Professor Brown stated that one of the challenges of using active learning strategies, especially at the beginning of the class, is classroom management:

If the [strategy is] active, if the class can't stay focused in the first few weeks, cause in the first weeks you are establishing the classroom management so I kind of do a little project with them at the beginning, and see how they do with active, if they don't follow.

Professor Jenkins talked about the challenges of working with a community partner with the class doing service learning:

I would add that you have to pick and choose regarding service learning and doing really worthwhile unit with a partner. Our understanding has to be very clear with the partner and as to what is to be expected and the learning outcomes of the student are.

Theme: Positive perceptions of active learning strategies. All participants were able to identify positive aspects of active learning strategies. Professor Brown affirmed a positive view of active learning: "Yep, cause of my personality. I love it." Assistant Professor Jenkins, though having reservations stated, "In the visual arts, specifically the ceramic area, and my specialty is three-dimensional interactions using mass, environment, installations, active learning is very important." Assistant Professor Tibido "I think with the arts it's easy to do active learning." Lecturer Jones stated, "Active learning strategies, well always different ways of learning, I mean I like it." Although Professor Monroe admitted that she was not sure of what constituted active learning approaches, she stated she had a favorable impression of them: "Active learning strategies, I'm not exactly sure I understand what active learning means, if that means them actively participating in, I like it." Professor Lark stated, "I am open to learning

anything I can to improve the student's ability to retain the information do critical thinking about the information and understand why they are in this class."

Theme: Perception that current strategies are active strategies. All participants perceived that they utilized at least some active learning strategies in their classrooms. Professor Brown stated, "That's sort of what we always do," while Assistant Professor Jenkins, although initially hesitant, stated, "That is my preferred method—active is my preferred." Assistant Professor Tibido stated

That's what the arts is. That - I don't know how you cannot do that, I mean, not to be funny but what is the nonactive learning strategy, even if you are lecturing and you ask them do you get it? Even if they [do] not, that's active.

Lecturer Jones, being a younger educator, stated the following:

A lot of times when I'm teaching I like to use the group method. You know the each one teach one method as well, every student go their own learning ways of learning things, and me being an individual teacher sometimes it would be hard to reach out them individually.

Jenkins referred to the changes made in her last 3 years, "I'm employing more technology via blackboard, YouTube, and this is more engaging to a lot of the young students, so I think my teaching has changed in that respect."

Professor Monroe stated

I do some of that active learning in some of their lecture classes in particular this year I'm teaching a new course, Contemporary World Drama and it can get pretty

dry when it's just reading the plays and discussing the plays so I added another element in.

Assistant Professor Lark stated

I combine the two. I've always combined the two, so that I can get definite feedback from the students so that I'm not always doing the lecturing. I really ask them to ask questions, which are very difficult at the very beginning of the semester, but by the end the students are active.

Category: *Post-seminar interview.* This category has four major themes. They are *Advantages to active learnings Strategies, Downsides to implementing learning strategies, Syllabi changes as a result of learning about active strategies, and Effect on engagement.* There were no subsequent subthemes generated from the post seminar.

Theme: Advantages to active learning strategies. All but one participant made statements about what they thought were the advantages of utilizing active learning strategies after attending the seminar. The exception was Professor Jenkins, who was unable to give a response because she was unable to attend the seminar due to a prior commitment. In regard to the advantages of active learning strategies, Professor Brown had the most to say: "It allows for the students to 'discover' information at a speed that works for them and allows them to process the information though the act of 'doing.'" He added, "The processes I use in class allow the student to develop their own voice, while working to answer the assigned problem." He also stated, "I believe they can used easily in my classrooms."

Assistant Professor Tibido stated that active learning was “Brilliant, truly. This is what we as educators should be doing with this generation.” She said that what she found advantageous about these strategies was, “Instant application of a concept.” My only lecturer in the participant pool, Professor Jones, stated that he definitely planned to use some of the strategies in the future. He added, “It’s an excellent to assess the students’ progress as well as making learning a little more interesting.” Professor Monroe stated that the seminar and active learning strategies offered “new perspectives.” She added, “A few of them may not work in my discipline, but I plan to employ a few of them.” She also recognized the need for them, “Honestly, teachers need to do and learn with the students. This isn’t going to sit well with people who just lecture.” Post seminar, she had the most difficult time finding ways to implement active learning strategies in her class. Assistant Professor Lark stated, “I feel that the students understand that there are many ways to learn information. Multiple learning models help to reinforce the information in the lesson.”

Theme: Downsides to implementing active learning strategies. Four participants voiced concerns over using active learning strategies. Lecturer Jones was concerned about keeping the students extremely focused. Professor Brown seemed more concerned with the greater physical commitment by the teacher, stating that they can be very tiring: “These activities require a greater physical commitment by the teacher, they can be very tiring.” Professor Monroe who had the most difficulty using the active strategies could not think of any downsides to the learning strategy. She stated that, “experimentation only provides information on what works and what may not work.” Jenkins was unable to

attend the seminar, but still voiced the concern that “strategies may foster more disengagement during critiques and attendance.” Professor Lark, remained more teacher center even after the seminar and was afraid that with active learning strategies, “At times I can’t get to all of the material planned for that day.”

Theme: Syllabi changes as a result of learning about active strategies. All the participants commented on ways they would change their syllabi with the intention of incorporating more active learning strategies into their classes. Assistant Professor Tibido, when discussing changes in syllabi concerning active strategies, stated, “It wouldn’t change other than include more homework regarding background work for students to come prepared to be active in class.” Professor Brown stated “Greater creative assignments, with the more hands on elements.” Professor Jenkins, although she did not attend the seminar, she did attempt to incorporate active learning strategies through the use of technology in the form of a video of instructions for a particular lesson. She stated that she would like to incorporate “the development of a group interaction during critiques and art making.” Lecturer Jones thought that he would change “the wording of my goals and objectives.” Assistant Professor Lark was certain “my syllabus already includes many of the strategies.” Professor Monroe would add a section titled “Strategies” to her current syllabi. Admittedly this would be for a new course, and all lessons would need to develop from scratch in order to meet the active learning accountability standards.

Theme: Effect on engagement. Four participants (Professor Brown, Assistant Professor Jenkins, Assistant Professor Tibido, and Professor Monroe) discussed

engagement and the effect active learning appeared to have on students. Assistant Professor Jenkins stated

Students respond by actively involving themselves in service learning and peer-driven activities. These also foster good communication skills in and outside the classroom environment. For some visual art students, social engagement is a skill that may inhibit their involvement and creating a network of supportive structures.

Assistant Professor Tibido stated, “Students today are actively engaged in information, on their phones, everywhere. The response is positive because they are connecting what they already know to what’s new.” Professor Brown responded by saying, “Students respond to the energy with energy. If they feel the teacher is excited they will be more engaged.” Despite Professor Monroe’s difficulty incorporating the active learning strategies, she realized “the students became engaged in discussions a bit more readily.”

Research question 2. The second research question asked, “What influence does a seminar on active learning methods have on student engagement after an instructor attempts to incorporate the recently learned material into his or her classroom?” This research question was answered by looking at perceptions of instructors of student engagement after having implemented active learning strategies in their classrooms. In addition, the researcher observed student engagement before and after the instructor implemented them. In regards to instructors’ perceptions, Professor Brown said, “Students respond to the energy with energy, if they feel the teacher is excited they will be more engaged.” Brown was already using some active learning strategies prior to the

seminar. Students in his class were learning advertising, graphic design, and illustration. They used their graphic skills to learn self-marketing and advertising techniques, computer generated images, and technology (computers and software). He challenged each student to develop a 'Happy Meal Box.' After the seminar he had students discuss amongst themselves the concepts of branding, promoting their content, needs for advertising, and even envisioning the initial class assignment. Professor Jenkins did not attend the seminar, but she did attempt to implement a strategy in her classroom. She chose not to comment on the strategies she implemented and instead she commented upon the effects active learning strategies had on student engagement. The researcher encouraged her to develop a YouTube video of instructions for the drawing students were to accomplish. She had complained about repeating herself over and over. After agreeing to do so, she uploaded this to Blackboard and students were able to refer back to the directions as many times as needed. Professor Jenkins had not thought of this and was very excited about the decision. Students also expressed how pleased they were with the upload.

Professor Tibido was also using active learning strategies before attending the seminar. In dance, Professor Tibido felt as these strategies helped students connect new learning with prior learning. Professor Monroe, who had the most difficulty integrating these strategies, stated that using the strategies made her students more engaged, yet they were eager to get back to watching the play from all the discussion. Professor Lark's students asked more engaging questions about the lecture, and he felt as though they had a different depth of understanding. Lecturer Jones did not respond to the question

regarding engagement. There was an overall agreement to include these modifications in at least one course and reflect it in their syllabi.

General Impressions of Evaluation of Seminar on Student Engagement

From the observations made before, during, and after the seminar was presented, it became evident that a few participants actually perceived active learning as simple question and answer interactions between professors and students. As we progressed through the presentation, there was a need to be reminded that all active learning strategies were from a student-centered model, not teacher-centered model.

All the instructors recognized they needed tools in order to begin, so sample strategies were provided, and they were able to brainstorm as a group what was possible in their respective disciplines. During the post observation, Professor Brown and Tibido were continuing active learning, but had added some additional structure, such as emphasizing Bloom's taxonomy as they moved from knowledge to evaluation.

Lecturer Jones, who had the largest class, (48), had the most dramatic increase in student engagement from before to after attending the seminar. He did this by dividing his class into what he called "squads" and each was given a musical genre to research. It was exciting to see how Lecturer Jones was able to take 48 students in a Music Appreciation class and give them an activity that kept them engaged. His course by far was the most difficult simply due to the number of students he had. Initially, during the preobservation, his technology was not working and his project really got off to a rocky start. He worked diligently to get those students thoroughly engaged through creativity and incorporating many of their ideas. His expertise is in band, so he elected to

incorporate his class into squads and allow students to select the genre of music they shared. They had to come up with the ideas for their presentations. They went to the library and came back to present their findings in any creative way possible. The gospel music presentation was quite unique and entitled *The Choir Anniversary*. The students were creative and competed with each other in their presentations. This was essential in a student-centered atmosphere and engagement of the students increased from less than half the class to most of the class.

Professor Monroe displayed the most difficulty in integrating active learning strategies, but with only six students, she also had the smallest class. She found it difficult to “think out of the box,” but she was able to incorporate a “One minute paper” for students to complete with questions or statements that did not understand” regarding the terms assimilationist, Prometheus, and a dream deferred, all terms used in the class analysis of “A Raisin in the Sun.” Prior to seminar training these students were not engaged at all. Despite the fact that they were few in number and the fact that students were on their phones, or sometimes totally unresponsive, Professor Monroe continued to lecture. Through her exposure to active learning strategies, it was impressed upon her the need to recognize the boredom and she was able to come up with the idea of using the “One minute paper.” Her class engagement rose from less than half to half of the class.

In discussing art history, Assistant Professor Lark initially used the videos that were a part of the text, which were not up to date and failed to make any connections with the students’ prior learning. After the seminar, he decided to use YouTube videos that were more engaging than those from the textbook to help students understand the

Byzantine era; he engaged them in discussions regarding not only art but religion. The class did ask about a class Twitter page, so that if they came across something they did not understand they could tweet. In the researcher's opinion, this may be out of the comfort zone of the Assistant Professor Lark, but this remains to be seen.

Implications Including Social Change

Local Community

The department chair of Performing and Fine Arts was pleased with the reception of the seminar on the part of the faculty. Thus, the decision has been made to conduct more seminars, so that all of the instructors in the department can benefit from them. The department chair can readily see the benefit of all instructors having a chance to learn more about active learning strategies and to find ways to implement them in their classrooms. This is one way the department can enhance the learning and retention of students within the department. Eventually it is the desire of UOS to offer this training to all new faculty hires, especially those who have little or no training in teaching.

Because 50% of the UOS is comprised of adult learners, instructors should take advantage of this educational focus on integrating active learning strategies. Instructors must also be cognizant of multiple intelligences, andragogy, and culturally relevant teaching. Adult learners desire a quality education and with the key concepts mirrored in engagement, modeling, self-direction, and most of all reflection, they will be successful. With instructors using more active learning strategies, these adult learners can benefit from and utilize their past experiences.

Far-reaching

The study has the ability to be utilized not only at Historically Black Colleges and Universities but in all schools of higher learning. The landscape of learners seeking a bachelor's degree has changed over the years and this is especially the case for the nontraditional student. There is a wealth of knowledge these learners bring into the classroom. They may also bring many different learning styles. Professors who are steeped in lecture presentation will need to update their teaching strategies to meet the needs of the 21st century adult learner. In doing so, they can help with the retention rates at their institutions and better meet the needs of their learners.

Conclusion

This project is timely and extremely beneficial to those who agreed to take part in the experience. There is a cliché "If you've always done what you've always done, you'll get the same results." The 21st century is comprised of students who are not only Black and White, but who represent a plethora of races, ethnicities, religions, and cultures. In some cases, English is not even their first language. Students need instructors and institutions who cannot only meet them where they are, but who also have high expectations for them, and care about whether they excel in and outside of the classroom. Teachers have gotten us all where we are today and therefore, their need to stay abreast of new innovative ideas, and ways to present materials is not "a frill, but a necessity".

This project represents a vehicle that many instructors in many institutions can utilize to expose these strategies to teachers who are unaware of their impact on student

engagement. It is crucial that instructors recognize the concept of multiple intelligences and to understand the ways that their strategies can engage these intelligences. Adding and integrating active learning strategies into courses within the performing and fine arts proved to be exhilarating and enjoyable at the same time. All professors agreed to implement at least one strategy in one or two classes and continue the process as they realized all students were more actively engaged. In the next section, reflections, recommendations, limitations, and conclusions of the project will be discussed as well as the potential effect of the project on social change.

Section 4: Reflection and Conclusion

Introduction

Project studies allow researchers to investigate a specific phenomenon and reveal its strengths, weaknesses, and future implications. Through this action research project, which involved observations and interviews, I collected three rounds of data to discover faculty members' perceptions of active learning strategies before and after they implemented them in their classrooms. The classes observed were World Drama, Music Appreciation, Studio Design, Art History, Basic Drawing, and Beginning Dance. All classes possessed a lecture component, and three included lecture and laboratory. I used the Direct Observation Instrument Management Checklist (DOIM) to chronicle setting, teacher action, and class engagement before and after the instructors were introduced to active learning strategies. This research culminated in the design of a 2-day seminar that incorporated the findings of this study and will be useful to encourage teachers in other institutions to implement active learning strategies into their lecture-based courses.

Preinterview responses showed that many of the professors thought they were using active learning strategies, but they considered question and answers to be an active learning technique. It was eye opening for them to realize that active learning was so much more than that. Two professors in the study, in Graphic Design and Dance respectively, were the closest to using active learning strategies prior to the seminar. However, there were still tools that they were not aware of and they learned exciting new ways to present the material as well as new ways to evaluate. These two were quite open to new strategies because they were risk takers.

Instructors in the study were exposed to active learning strategies through a seminar. Dr. Noran Moffett, Associate Dean of the School of Education at the UOS presented definitions of active learning strategies and how they are different from lecture approaches. Strategies were introduced that could be useful in the classroom and especially those that could be readily incorporated into lectures. Some of these strategies included ink shedding, think/pair/share, one-minute papers, and video instructions.

Although it was not required that teachers attempt to implement these strategies in their classrooms, all chose to do so. Teachers were given 2 weeks to implement the strategies in their lecture classes and the researcher completed a post observation visit utilizing the same measuring tool. The fourth round of data collection included a recorded post interview session to gain the perceptions of instructors on what they thought the effects of active learning strategies were on student engagement.

The majority of the participants were receptive to the active strategies. Professor Monroe was the most apprehensive because she stated that they were out of her comfort zone. I suggested a “one minute paper” for students to complete with questions or statements that they did not understand regarding the terms *assimilationist*, *Prometheus*, and a *dream deferred*. These suggestions helped to bring some interaction to the class. When the instructor offered a group exam, it was clear that the one-minute paper not only brought more engagement to the class, with the assistance of think/pair/share, but that it also had the desired effect in that students understood these terms.

Some instructors were concerned with time spent and how they would fit these new strategies into their current syllabi and courses. They ultimately decided that it

would be best to begin with one class and possibly add more in the future. In this chapter, this researcher will present her reflections and conclusions having completed the project study. Strengths, limitations, and an empirical discussion are included. Lastly, project impacts that may result in social change and directions for future research will be discussed.

Project Strengths

Researchers have suggested that lecture continues to predominate as the primary mode of lesson presentation in higher education (Ediger, 2001). The offerings through this study were the integration of active learning strategies in specific performing and fine art classes in the form of a seminar that may be useful for instructors of other subjects as well. Although research literature has demonstrated the positive affect active learning has on student engagement (Center, 2010, Czabanowska, 2012; Gleason, Peeters, & Resman-Targoff, 2011), some professors appear reluctant to modify their lessons. These instructors may find it too troublesome to change methods or they continue to prefer teacher-centered learning simply because they do not want to relinquish their power in the classroom (Winstone & Millward, 2012).

One of the strengths of the study was that it emphasized the importance of multiple intelligences, culturally relevant teaching, and andragogy, approaches that are not only useful with adult learners, but which are also useful for all learners. Active learning strategies provided instructors with new, innovative ways to liven up their basic lecture classes. When instructors used these strategies, they could see the potential benefits of having a student-centered classroom. The study's project was a culmination

of lessons learned through exposing instructors in the areas of Music, Art, Theatre, and Dance activities and their lesson planning that increases student engagement.

The data also highlighted the importance of efficacy in teaching styles. All researchers suppose active learning is superior to passive; however, such superiority has proved difficult to quantify (Pierce, 2013). In this study, all the instructors who attended the seminar and who tried to utilize an active learning strategy in their classrooms were able to observe the effects on engagement.

Professor Jenkins was unable to attend the seminar, but we were able to meet together and come up with a way to incorporate active learning strategies into her drawing class. Jenkins expressed the need to repeat herself often regarding instructions. My suggestion to her was to record her specific instructions via her YouTube channel and then upload this recording to Blackboard. By doing this, students were able to view the instructions as many times as they felt was necessary, and thus, all students could now turn to the website when they needed clarification. Associate Professor Jenkins found this extremely helpful; it was something new that she had never considered.

Assistant Professor Tibido used her video camera as a teaching tool where students could rewind and go back over sections of the dance they found difficult. Her implementation of active learning strategies was also evident in her attitude towards students. Her words were uplifting and students were not likely to give up trying.

Professor Brown thought that engagement was energy driven. Because this class's focus was graphic design, students worked on branding and their subject was a Happy Meal box. Student's boxes evolved into a Blitz Box, Bronco Box, and Halloween

Box to name a few. Professor Brown was one of the two instructors who had been utilizing active learning strategies before the seminar. He was able to utilize these strategies in an evaluation which these students seem to greatly enjoy.

Professor Monroe, despite being hesitant initially, did admit that her students were more engaged when she tried the strategies. She was an instructor who was most comfortable with teacher-centered presentation. She seemed to like to be in control of the class. She was completely removed from her comfort zone after the seminar, but she sought ways to discuss the vocabulary differently. The suggestions she implemented did help bring some interaction to the class, so the instructor offered a group exam and using think/pair/share worked. With think/pair/share, students received a worksheet, took notes on his or her own answers, as well as his or her partner's answers. The pair of students then decided what would be shared with the rest of the class. Most of the ideas were received positively by students and they were more engaged in the learning. When looking at the results of the observation, the amount of student engagement increased.

Professor Lark looked for active ways to discuss the Byzantine Era in Art History, and we decided on discussion boards in Blackboard and a “top 10 list”, which could result in 10 ways to learn the materials through a variety of strategies. One of the strategies he utilized was jigsaw teamwork, where students completed exercises in which a general topic is divided into smaller, interrelated pieces. In their teams each student taught something important about every piece of the puzzle and they were able to summarize the answer.

Participant Jones lectured in Band and Music Appreciation at the time of the study. By use of active learning strategies; Lecturer Jones' moved student engagement from less than 50% to more than 75%. This was the largest shift in engagement in any class, and he did it by dividing the class into squads. Students were divided and each was given a musical genre to research. They went to the library and came back to present their findings in any creative way possible. Students had a "talk-back session", and it was clear that they really enjoyed that. This was a class of 48, and each tried to compete with each other for the most outstanding presentation. These were not music majors, and this was an elective class. Students were engaged and responsible for their learning.

These results are in keeping with literature that has shown that active learning strategies are effective in engaging students Cushman (2014). They have been so effective, that many college faculty members have modified introductory courses to include more active learning strategies in order to increase retention and graduation rates (Detlora, Booker, Serenko, & Julien, 2012; McNaughton, Hamlin, McCarthy, Head-Reeves, & Schreiner, 2007).

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

Limitations

The limitations of this project are as follows: Some participants were apprehensive about what they were going to be asked to do. Although, during the seminar presentation, all instructors who attended seemed focused and ready to learn about the active learning strategies, there were a few moments at the beginning of the seminar where some instructors were nervous. Change is difficult, and a few were

concerned they were going to be asked to throw away all of their ideas and presentations and begin anew. Once clarification was made on “building on our strengths,” they were more readily participating and asking questions, especially for clarification, if it was a strategy they did not know.

Despite the fact that Professor Brown and Jenkins were using some form of active engagement, they too were seeking other tools in order to mix up their lesson presentations. Based upon my observation, Professor Monroe was going to have the most difficulty utilizing these strategies because she has not completely “bought into the idea” of student-centered learning, but she did try to make her lessons more engaging.

For all of the concepts introduced, there is one recurring limitation, and that was time. The time allotted for this one-session seminar was 1 hour, and this limited the ability to share enough information and provide sufficient explanations to help instructors feel confident in implementing these strategies. The seminar did not create a way for instructors to learn how to incorporate these strategies into their particular subject area and learning climates. A final limitation is that some classes with 40 or more students can be daunting for those new to higher education. These new instructors may be challenged to maintain the attention of that many students.

Remediation of Limitations

The seminar was expanded and redesigned to correct its limitations. The seminar was made into a 2-day seminar, with 2 hours each day, so that instructors will be able to not only get information but also get opportunities to work in groups and “brainstorm” ways they can incorporate these strategies into their specific content areas. In addition,

the seminar that comprises the first day of the project introduces “well-structured lectures.” It introduces the idea of incorporating new strategies into what is traditionally a lecture component in many classrooms.

The idea of “building on our strengths” was included in order to help ease the nervousness instructors have to any change in the way they teach. There is a place in the seminar where instructors are asked what they know about active learning strategies and what drawbacks they may perceive, so that the seminar can address these. The seminar has the potential to help instructors who teach large classes that rely heavily on lecture to find ways to introduce these strategies in simple ways. As instructors they can then grow as they become more familiar with these tools. Perhaps another, more advanced, seminar could be created and introduced for those who want to keep developing active learning strategies in their classrooms. In addition, if this project, or seminar, could be presented as part of the requirements for those who are new to teaching, it would be extremely beneficial.

Scholarship

Scholarship and passion were the basic components of this project study. After teaching middle school students for 28 years and then making the move to higher education, it became apparent to me that something needed to be done to improve the quality of teaching in upper level courses. Sometimes it appeared as though instructors placed too little emphasis on whether the students comprehended the information or not. It was evident that there needed to be a change in how lessons were delivered and more

attention paid to the types of learners in the class, so that lessons could be adapted to increase student engagement and achievement.

This study gave me a phenomenal opportunity to research ways in which today's college students could be actively engaged in their learning, and instructors would become more student-centered in their approaches. There are ideas one has as a teacher that are innovative and exciting however, one often wonders how these ideas may fit into a large class where the instructor may not know all the students' names or have the ability to develop a rapport with them. Adult learners of the 21st century have grown up in a society where everything is fast paced and where efforts are often met with immediate results. If this is the expectation of those who are taught, a long lecture and a few slides are not going to motivate them to make connections in their learning. Researching active learning strategies and the effects they have on adult learners has provided me with exciting and endless possibilities for instruction. It was gratifying to know that while reading and immersing myself in the research, there was empirical evidence to support my passions and belief.

Scholarly writing was difficult for me initially. When all of one's teaching has been in the lower grades, one needs retraining in order to convey one's thoughts in an academic manner. There were times when I knew exactly what I wanted to say, but used many unnecessary words to get my point across. It took me several rewrites during my prospectus stage to get a handle on what some may consider a simple process. I realized that first I needed to believe in my own ability to achieve and with that I began to work and find resources for myself. Some were through the writing center that helped me

organize my ideas. I had a tendency to jump around in my thoughts. However, this tendency is a natural product of working full time while pursuing a terminal degree. It is difficult to find enough reflective space to germinate ideas. The process of putting one's thoughts to writing is very satisfying though, and with time, my writing became more lucid.

By creating and researching this project, I was able to use all my strengths as a researcher, instructor, and innovator. I was able to speak intelligently and passionately about my project and my beliefs and why I think active learning, culturally relevant teaching, and multiple intelligences have their place in higher education and should not end in high school. There is research to verify my suspicions and now my own study is a part of that literature.

Project Development and Evaluation

Creating the project initially began as a search for something I was passionate about and then finding research in order to support it. The first efforts were fruitless and I found myself searching over the research landscape without much direction. Through working diligently, I was able to discern what I wanted to do, the focus of the study became clearer, and I was able to hone in on three distinct themes to work towards. These themes became multiple intelligences, andragogy, and culturally relevant teaching.

I knew instinctively that this would be a qualitative study and upon examining exactly what I wanted to achieve, I realized that action research was the appropriate methodology. As an arts educator, I knew that I wanted to begin in my department because I saw the apathy of the students first hand. They would sit in lecture classes and

come away with hardly any concrete information. Most researchers and educators are aware that all of this is not the fault of the instructors, but these classes are small with the exception of a few and in the arts. Active learning should be the choice of teaching in these classes, but it became evident to me that it was not.

My data collection consisted of pre- and post-interviews and observations, which culminated in a 2-day seminar on active learning strategies. This was exciting but analyzing transcriptions proved to be quite an undertaking. I was elated though, as I went through each stage of the data collection. Despite the fact I work with these instructors on a daily basis, each one had a very different method of lesson delivery, as well as different perceptions of active learning strategies. They had to be reminded that integrating question and answer periods into their lecture courses did not constitute incorporating active learning strategies.

After administering the post seminar interviews and made observations in the classrooms, I reviewed the data and developed themes. I integrated the barriers they voiced, their hesitations, and their experiences in utilizing active learning strategies into the 2-day seminar. I decided to include a second day of the seminar so that seminar participants would be able to get the chance to experience these techniques and problem-solve ways to integrate more active learning strategies into their lectures, as well as create evaluation strategies for their classrooms.

Leadership and Change

The UOS is a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) and began as an institution for teachers. Professional development opportunities are available throughout

the academic year and this project can become a part of the training offered each semester. Perhaps this can be a required activity for new teachers and a refresher for those who wish it. Those who are attending for a second time may be in a position to work with new faculty to help them develop strategies that could be incorporated into their specific classes and content areas.

Instructors who take the seminar will be able to readily perceive the effect on students. The ability to know what strategy works best for one's students is the most basic expectation of self-reflective learning for faculty. Such a project being offered at an institutional level will likely lead to higher levels of instruction, increased student self-efficacy, and higher student success rates (Michel et al., 2009).

Instructional practices influence student performance and self-efficacy. Self-efficacy influences behavior directly and indirectly. Levels of self-efficacy are reflected in the ability to make good judgments in task specific skills to accomplish goals related to learning and performance. With a greater number of faculty members seeking ways to incorporate active learning strategies into their classroom, not only the self-efficacy of the teachers will be increased but that of students as well.

For instructors, the ability to organize and execute courses and attain one's goals is a reflection of self-efficacy. For students, active learning allows for immediate feedback where students are able to process the information taught during the sessions. Together, this leads to higher quality education.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

The online doctoral program is difficult. These courses are essentially student-centered courses, and once I was able to comprehend that concept fully, my knowledge increased. It was a great deal of hard work, and towards the end I surprised myself to learn how I was able to move through the process. Working full time, making plans for large classes, and in my case, traveling with students to perform while seeking this degree has shown me that I have a great deal of determination to progress and excel. Unfortunately, during this time period I lost 3 siblings, which was devastating, but I had to find the will power to press through the sorrow and disappointment and continue.

I began my educational career as the only one of seven children to have earned a college degree. Now I will be the only one to have received a doctoral degree. This is rewarding, despite the fact my parents are not alive to witness it. My scholarship is ongoing, and life-long.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

As a teacher, before moving to higher education, the bulk of my experience was with underprivileged youth in an urban setting. I found I worked with students from an affective domain and the belief that their setting led to a lack of dreams and beliefs that they could be better than their parents, or family members. The school environment was 90% free or reduced lunch, 90% minority, and 90% below average in terms of grade level. Nonetheless, I found these students had great gifts in the arts. Many were confused and angry with life in general. Education was not the passion or dream that it had been in my generation; however, I felt a kindred spirit in working with them. These

students needed to know that they could be productive and influential in and around the community. This prepared me for my move to higher education. I found that students I was encountering in higher education were not unlike my students in the public school system. I recognized that their learning styles, and even where they came from, had an effect on their educational strengths and pursuits.

In preparing a seminar on active learning strategies, collecting and analyzing data, I realized that I was developing the expertise to reach beyond my own classroom to help students connect with their dreams. I realized that many educators care about whether the students get it or not. Even though they might have to move beyond some psychological barriers, they are motivated to do so if it means building a rapport with students. They too need the tools to help them bridge this gap. This study has led to the realization of the need for this structure and most of all the benefits that are ultimately going to lead to the success of a greater number of students in the educational arena who just need to utilize their strengths to find a way to express themselves and contribute.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

Managing this project study with the demands of working full time was time consuming and overwhelming at times. Plans were often made to work on my paper daily, but it became apparent very quickly that these “best laid plans” do not always work out. When I approached the data collection stage, filing, writing, and keeping everything in its proper order, became of paramount importance. This project forced me to get a routine, stick to it, and be accountable for every step of the process. I became a project developer through the hands-on process of doing. Through reviewing and manipulating

data, I highlighted the strengths and areas that needed developing in the seminar to provide a better instrument to increase confidence of instructors in implementing active learning strategies into their repertoire.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

Effective teachers keep informed of the latest trends and developments, as well as constantly sharpening and updating their skills. In order for university professors to conduct themselves as facilitators of learning and in order to produce scholars who will make a difference in society, their methods of course delivery must be analyzed and scrutinized for their sustainability and effectiveness for the 21st century.

It is evident that the status quo in delivering instruction is no longer producing the global scholars for the 21st century. Instructors must be sure students are ready to compete on the world stage for positions not only nationally but internationally. Educators cannot “sit back on their laurels” and continue to deliver lessons in the same way.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The project study was built on a data collection process that was limited to only six participants in the Department of Performing and Fine Arts. The areas of concentration were Art, Music, Theater, and Dance. The examples therefore that are provided in the project are limited to only a third of the performing arts faculty; however, the seminar itself lends itself to all subject areas. The seminar covers the most fundamental pedagogical concepts and strategies.

More training is needed if instructors are to have a thorough theoretical foundation in andragogy, culturally relevant teaching, and multiple intelligences and to experience the potential effects of incorporating them into their curricula. Instructors must persevere in implementing these strategies. If this seminar is to be taught in other institutions, then their leaders will need to be motivated enough to provide it to their instructors. Developing these new skill sets may pressure universities and departments to design curricula and instructional practices to keep up with the latest trends (Crosling, 2008).

In today's higher education, paper and pencil are no longer the only tools of choice. Students must be media savvy and computer literate to succeed (Devlin 2011). Shared understanding of content is important to ensure the credibility of university learning and teaching (Devlin, 2010).

In the past, with teacher-centered learning, there was not much attention paid to diverse learners, or the barriers that influence our educational endeavors. Due to structural inequality, regarding class and ethnicity, teachers sometimes held low expectations for the accomplishments of diverse students (Kunjufu, 2009). High expectations are now of paramount importance, as we have many students who do not have English as their first language. When instructors assume the role of facilitators of learning and integration of active learning strategies into their classes, social change is inevitable and in so doing the differences students bring to the classroom are celebrated and utilized to increase the learning of all students (McLeod et al., 2012).

In today's constantly fluctuating economic and technological climate, maintaining employment may require constant learning and relearning (Schmidt, 2010). It is vital for the adult learner to establish specific and measurable goals as well as use targets to maintain momentum. Constructing a successful educational culture necessitates focusing on values and supporting quality teaching and learning outcomes (Southwell, 2010). I believe I accomplished these in my project study. I hope to share this with as many people as possible.

Conclusion

As teachers we have a duty to promote our profession wherever possible. By serving as role models, by actively participating in our communities, by affiliating with professional organizations, and by utilizing every available forum to vocally applaud the teaching profession, we offer this country's greatest commodity: education.

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Appendix A: Active Learning Seminar For Faculty

Two-Day Seminar on Active Learning Strategies**Length: 4 hours over a 2-day period (breaks included)****Materials Needed:** Computer, LCD, handouts, paper, pens or pencils**Purpose:** The general purpose of this seminar is to acquaint instructors with specific active learning strategies they can introduce in their classes.**Day One****Introduction (5 minutes):** Discuss the reason for today's meeting. *“Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in the seminar and discussing active learning strategies and their integration into one or more of your classes.” Today we are going to delve into different ideas and approaches to active learning strategies within the higher education environment.***Ice Breaker: Fact or Fiction (15 minutes)****Activity: *Breaking into four groups.*** *Let us begin by counting off 1-4 so we can divide the class into 4 groups.***Directions:** All individuals are asked to count off 1-4. Once the entire group has counted, then they are asked to find their group. The instructor will need to designate a spot where each will gather. The instructor says, “We’ve gone through the entire group, all the ones get together here, twos, here; threes over here; and fours in the far side of the room.”

Rationale: The purpose of selecting groups this way is to easily get those who may not normally work together to do so. It is fair and easy to divide for the learning session.

Ice Breaker Directions: The instructor passes out paper and pens to all the students. Students are asked to write three things about themselves, which are probably unknown to the group. The instructor says, *Now I want each one of you to write three things about yourself that the class does not know, two that are true and one that is false.* When students have finished writing, the instructor will say, *Now we will go to each person and have everyone read the three things about themselves and each person has to guess which are true and false.*

Rationale. The purpose of this activity is for all participants to relax and begin to learn some secrets of cooperative and collaborative learning.

Structured Lecture (50 minutes): The instructor says, *Now that we are in our groups, let's begin our session by discussing specific strategies regarding integrating active learning strategies.*

Objective: The learner will begin to learn through student-centered activities.

Introduction (5 minutes): The seminar facilitator asks, *Faculty, you may ask yourselves, can I use active learning in all areas? Answer: YES! This is going to be a 2-day workshop, which is aimed to help you mind the gaps, explore the barriers, and identify the needs of the students. We are all educators taking part in this seminar on active learning strategies. We have all come here with different strengths, abilities, and talents. As we work our way through this session, we will build on those attributes and*

develop ways to make our students more successful, our classes more engaging, and most of all become more likely to move out of our comfort zones. As our students have multiple intelligences, so do we, so we will not only learn what those concepts are, but better ways to use them for academic success. There is a wealth of knowledge in this room. Let's share it!

Rationale. The idea of “building on our strengths” was included in order to help ease the nervousness instructors have to any change in the way they teach. Each point will be introduced and questions will be answered at the end of each section.

Overview: The facilitator uses a power point, with audio and visual aids to discuss the following benefits of active learning strategies. *We begin by talking about multiple intelligences the learning needs of the 21st century adult learner.*

Multiple intelligences (20 minutes): *This lecture will introduce what multiple intelligences are and why are they important to the active learning process. Prior to delving into each intelligence, the groups will be given a survey that reveals their specific learning style and intelligence. It is entitled Multiple Intelligences Worksheet (Instructor gives hand out in the Appendix). We will take a few minutes to take and score the worksheet before resuming our discussion (allow 10 min).*

Rationale: Each group member needs to be aware of their own specific learning style. Howard Gardner of Harvard has identified seven distinct intelligences:

- ❖ Visual/Spatial – manipulation of mental images
- ❖ Verbal/Linguistic- reading, writing, speaking
- ❖ Logical/Mathematical- numbers and computation

- ❖ Bodily/Kinesthetic-physical dexterity
- ❖ Musical- singing, composing, or directing
- ❖ Interpersonal- how to work collaboratively
- ❖ Intrapersonal- understanding inner most feelings

Rationale: Multiple intelligences cater to diverse individualistic characteristics; hence, concentrating on them leads to teaching that is more effective because it addresses the diverse learners in the classroom (Gardner, 2011).

The 21st century learner (5 min): Instructor will introduce this section as follows: *This is a wealth of information, but we must be sure to understand the kind of learners we have today and arm ourselves with the tools to be successful. Currently, adult learners attend not only community colleges, but also traditional 4-year higher education institutions. Today's nontraditional learners include students whose first language is other than English, parents of young children, first generation college students, single-parent households, migrant workers, older students, and those who receive government assistance (Choy, 2002).*

- ❖ Students are expected to interact in the learning
- ❖ Instructors must recognize the majority of the learners use social media
- ❖ Once multiple intelligences are acknowledged, students should have a customized experience
- ❖ Adult learners think, and move in digital (technology based) environments
- ❖ Our students are constantly connected via the internet.
- ❖ The majority of classrooms and buildings give us instant access to technology

Rationale: It is important to understand the demographics of these students in order to understand why they learn better with active learning strategies. Colleges must understand that adult learners have specialized needs, a different orientation to education and learning, and that “because of time pressures, multiple options, adults’ own views of themselves, they are most likely to engage in education and to profit most from learning activities that are practical and problem-centered” (Smith, 2012 p. 39).

Review of key concepts (10 minutes): In discussing active learning, it is important to recognize the key principles that make up active learning strategies. They are self-direction, modeling, practice, feedback, and reflection. Each concept will be presented with appropriate examples as to how they relate.

Self-Direction: Malcolm Knowles developed a theory called andragogy specifically for adult learning. Malcolm Knowles emphasized that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for their decisions (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

Active: We assume that learning is a rational, intellectual activity. Active learning instructional strategies include exploring personal attitudes and values, engaging the student in critical thinking, and encouraging student engagement through giving and eliciting feedback. Active learning strategies acknowledge that emotions aid the learning process. Learning can be enhanced by engaging the senses, symbols, and through the use of technological devices (Gardner, 1995)

Modeling: Students observe the teacher through learning. In essence, the facilitator reads, lectures, and discusses information in a manner for students to emulate. If the instructor models how to master the subject matter, students are more inclined to replicate.

Feedback: In using Gardner's approach, instructors learn to offer immediate feedback that will benefit students to ensure educational progress and growth. Gardner's idea of teaching for understanding involves not only the accuracy with which it is learned but also the readiness in which it is recalled and used (Voparil, 2006).

Practice: Practice gives students stimulation through guided and independent practice. Practice helps students develop a sense of self confidence; overcome fear of failure.

Reflection: Instructors see evidence as to whether or not students have understood the concepts taught, or can restate what has been learned. Reflection should be incorporated into the student's learning as well; a good example is through journaling or writing about one's experience.

Mastery and summarization: Once students have mastered the material according to the objective, they should be able to summarize it in their own words. This is one way we know students have taken responsibility for their learning.

Rationale: The purpose of this exercise is adult learning principles: From theory to practice and the benefits and why each standard is important.

Benefits of active learning strategies (10 minutes): The instructor introduces this section of the lecture by saying, *We are now going to talk about the benefits of active learning strategies. I would also like to hear in what ways you feel you are now incorporating them, and what you believe to be the benefits and drawbacks of active learning strategies.* After hearing the replies, the instructor will say, *I hope to address these concerns with you at some point in the seminar as you begin to think of ways to implement these strategies in your classrooms.*

- Allow learners to identify their own learning goals and direct their education
- Relate to learners' current experiences
- Enable learners to be active contributors to their learning
- Provide support to engaged learners
- Allow learners to observe the instructor role-model behaviors
- Allow learners to practice what they learn
- Allow learners to receive feedback from teachers and/or peers
- Allow learners to reflect on their learning

Rationale: The purpose of this overview is to get each participant to begin thinking from a student-centered perspective. Workshop participants are asked what they know about active learning strategies and what drawbacks they may perceive so that the seminar can address those.

Break (10 minutes)

Application of Active Learning Strategies in Fine Arts Classrooms: (30 minutes).

In Professor Monroe's theatre class, the basic objective was to have students learn about plays from other countries through reading and discussing them. Professor Monroe rightly feared the students were bored but did not know how to engage them. In order to attempt to alleviate that problem, she first turned the tables and had the students do the teaching. This was not successful because they did not have the tools for success. In order to make this more interesting, we used a series of strategies that included:

- ❖ **Muddiest Point:** This strategy have students put what they don't understand on notecards and then discuss.
- ❖ **Think/Pair/Share:** A collaborative learning strategy in which students work together to solve a problem or answer a question about an assigned reading. This technique requires students to (1) think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and (2) share ideas with classmates
- ❖ **Jigsaw teamwork:** One of the strategies he utilized was, where students completed exercises in which a general topic is divided into smaller, interrelated pieces, and as a team each student taught something important about every piece of the puzzle and were able to summarize the answer.

What are some of the strategies that can be used in large lecture classes? Well-structured lectures involves making connections to prior learning and taking time out for discussion. So these strategies can be used even within the context of large lecture. Students can break up into pairs readily and discuss muddiest point or share ideas about the topic with one another. Then the instructor can call on people who wish to volunteer what they discussed in pairs.

Professor Jenkins was tired of repeating herself, so we utilized technology by making a YouTube video of the directions and placed them on blackboard. By doing this, students were able to log on and see the directions as many times as needed to complete their drawing tasks.

Professor Monroe was intimidated by the lack of her student response, and also of relenting to a student-centered environment. She preferred being in charge at all times; nonetheless, we found ways to employ vocabulary exercises that not only ensured comprehension, but also success. The instructor admits it will take them time to think out of the box but is willing to try. In art history, Professor Lark decided to use more technology by integrating a class Twitter page, so that if they came across something they did not understand they could tweet.

Some professors were concerned that they would not be able to cover the same amount of material. But research has shown that “some teachers indicate that they cover as much or most content with student-centered learning approaches, while some of them indicate that, even if they cover less content than when they were using traditional methods, students are learning more.” (Domilescu, 2011, p. 41)

These are just a few examples of what actually transpired during data collection for the project study. Tomorrow we will work on some tasks that will help us develop a student-centered mentality for lesson delivery for the 21st century adult learner.

Question and Answer Period (10 minutes): The facilitator of the workshop will answer questions instructors may have about anything that was covered in the time remaining in the seminar. The instructor says, *Although I may not have the time to answer all of your*

questions, there will be time tomorrow to discuss any concerns you may have specifically in introducing these strategies into your classrooms.

Day Two

Introduction (5 minutes). The instructor begins this session by saying *Good afternoon. Thank you for returning for the 2nd session of Integrating Active Learning Strategies. Please get back into your groups and now we will begin brainstorming and constructing ideas to make our classrooms more engaging and exciting.*

Timed Activity: Keeps all focused and on task.

Activity: Experiencing Active Learning Strategies in with History (40 minutes)

Rationale: The purpose of selecting history as a topic is because it's relatable to all subjects and the choices given to the groups will be simpler and achieve success, especially for those just venturing out to use strategies.

Activity: (30 minutes): *The definition of history is “a branch of knowledge that records or explains past events.” Everyone, please select from the fishbowl. I will come around to each group. Now you have the following subjects:*

- ❖ Advertisements: Marketing (e.g., an ad documenting history of HBCUs)
- ❖ Films: Shaping History (e.g., Selma or Eyes on the Prize)
- ❖ Maps: Voter Registration (e.g. a map of North Carolina showing new districts, a map of redistricting going on in any state or several states)
- ❖ Photographs: Why was it selected, what does it depict (e.g., photograph could depict life in America from any time period)
- ❖ Political cartoons: Caricatures/Ridicule (e.g., Spend or Trim cartoon or cartoon from 2012 presidential election in which Big Bird, Ernie, and the Count say the following: Ernie says, “Hey Kids! Just 6 hours of spending

on defense equals the entire federal subsidy for public television. Big Bird says “But Mitt Romney thinks he can balance the budget by de-funding US! The vampire says, “Mitt needs to learn how to Count!”)

- ❖ Songs: Taking on the social themes of the day (“What’s Going on?” By Marvin Gaye or “Blown in the Wind” by Bob Dylan)

You have been given a specific example of your category from a time in history. Interpret what you see, how it is reflected in the 21st century and anything else that seems pertinent by what you’ve chosen. Brainstorm activities you can think of for the topic you have chosen. Let’s use the following to assist us:

- Muddiest Point – What do you not understand about the topic?
- Affective Response – How does it make you feel, or what is your initial impression?
- Wait time – Do we give student’s enough time to respond when you ask questions?
- Summarize another group member’s response
- Use think/pair/share (use Think/Pair/Share hand out)
- Peer Learning: In your groups, you will help one another come up with correct responses.

A timer will go off in 30 minutes letting you know to finish up and prepare to present your ideas.

Rationale: The purpose of the timer is to keep everyone on task. Faculty like to talk as well as students and if they are time conscious they will be more productive.

Reflection (10 minutes): *Let's see what we've learned with each group presenting your findings. Each group, come up and present your topic, how you brainstormed. Talk about the tools you used. The instructor will also ask, Did you enjoy interacting with one another? Did the fear of failure enter your mind?*

Break (10 minutes)

Activity 2: Evaluation Strategies (35 min)

Introduction (5 minutes): The instructor will give the seminar participants examples of evaluation strategies, with the intent of getting them thinking about different ways to evaluate their own classes within their individual content areas. The instructor gives the following examples of strategies that worked, one in a class that had been primarily lecture. One example is the evaluation project for students in graphic arts. The concept was advertising. Their project was to develop a Happy Meal Box. Students were given class time to fully develop their concepts. They used computers to generate their designs for the final physical product. Some of the final results of the Happy Meal Box became the: Blitz Box, Bronco Box, and Halloween Box.

Another evaluation strategy was the one that another participant used was teaching music appreciation. It was very hard to engage students in such a class. Music appreciation is often done through lecture, or having the student passively listen to different genres. This instructor decided to divide his students into squads and have them each present a different genre. They went to the library and came back to present their

findings in any creative way possible. Students had a talk-back session, and it was clear that they really enjoyed that. With a class of 48, each tried to compete with each other for the most outstanding presentation. These were not music majors, and this was an elective class. Students were engaged and responsible for their learning. One very interesting presentation was “The Choir Anniversary.” Their topic was Gospel Music Artists. Specifically, these artists included Shirley Caesar, Tamela Mann, The Mighty Clouds of Joy, and Kirk Franklin. Their presentations were complete with a Prezi presentations; a Prezi presentation is a computer-generated whiteboard that enables people to see, understand, and remember ideas by making monologues into conversations. Not only was he able to evaluate the students on this project, but he moved his class engagement from less than half of students engaged to most of the class engaged.

Activity (25 minutes): the class is divided into groups. The instructions are as follows: *We are now going to go back into our groups. The groups will come up with evaluation ideas for each participant’s content area and classroom. Each participant will share his or her area of content and challenges with the group and the group will brainstorm ideas for projects.*

Reflection (10 minutes): Instructor: Any one care to share what you came up with as a way to evaluate students in your subject?

Question and Answer (10 minutes).

Check out (5 minutes): All participants stated one thing they learning in the session. Tools, worksheets, and examples were given to each participant upon conclusion.

Rationale for check out: Reflections is our greatest tool regarding student-centered learning. Some may take place after the seminar.

Hand Outs: Multiple Intelligences Survey and Score Sheet**MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES WORKSHEETS**

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

The Multiple Intelligence theory suggests that no one set of teaching strategies will work best for all students at all times. All children have different proclivities in the seven intelligences, so any particular strategy is likely to be successful with several students, and yet, not for others. Because of these individual differences among students, teachers are best advised to use a broad range of teaching strategies with their students. As long as instructors shift their intelligence emphasis from presentation to presentation, there will always be a time during the period or day when a student has his or her own highly developed intelligence(s) actively involved in learning.

Key Points in MI Theory

- Each person possesses all seven intelligences - MI theory is not a "type theory" for determining the one intelligence that fits. It is a theory of cognitive

functioning, and it proposed that each person has capacities in all seven intelligences.

- Most people can develop each intelligence to an adequate level of competency - although an individual may bewail his deficiencies in a given area and consider his problems innate and intractable, Gardner suggests that virtually everyone has the capacity to develop all seven intelligences to a reasonably high level of performance if given the appropriate encouragement, enrichment, and instruction.
- Intelligences usually work together in complex ways - Gardner points out that each intelligence as described above is actually a "fiction"; that is no intelligence exists by itself in life (except perhaps in very rare instances in savants and brain-injured individuals.) Intelligences are always interacting with each other.
- There are many ways to be intelligent within each category - there is no standard set of attributes that one must have to be considered intelligent in a specific area. Consequently, a person may not be able to read, yet be highly linguistic because he can tell a terrific story or has a large, oral vocabulary. Similarly, a person may be quite awkward on the playing field, yet possess superior bodily-kinesthetic intelligence when she weaves a carpet or creates an inlaid chess table. MI theory emphasizes the rich diversity of ways in which people show their gifts within intelligences as well as between intelligences.

"All students can learn and succeed, but not all on the same day in the same way."

- William G. Spady

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES TEST

Where does your true intelligence lie? This quiz will tell you where you stand and what to do about it. Read each statement. If it expresses some characteristic of yours and sounds true for the most part, jot down a "T." If it doesn't, mark an "F." If the statement is sometimes true, sometimes false, leave it blank.

1. _____ I'd rather draw a map than give someone verbal directions.
2. _____ I can play (or used to play) a musical instrument.
3. _____ I can associate music with my moods.
4. _____ I can add or multiply in my head.
5. _____ I like to work with calculators and computers.
6. _____ I pick up new dance steps fast.

7. _____ It's easy for me to say what I think in an argument or debate.
8. _____ I enjoy a good lecture, speech or sermon.
9. _____ I always know north from south no matter where I am.
10. _____ Life seems empty without music.
11. _____ I always understand the directions that come with new gadgets or appliances.
12. _____ I like to work puzzles and play games.
13. _____ Learning to ride a bike (or skates) was easy.
14. _____ I am irritated when I hear an argument or statement that sounds illogical.
15. _____ My sense of balance and coordination is good.
16. _____ I often see patterns and relationships between numbers faster and easier than others.
17. _____ I enjoy building models (or sculpting).
18. _____ I'm good at finding the fine points of word meanings.
19. _____ I can look at an object one way and see it sideways or backwards just as easily.
20. _____ I often connect a piece of music with some event in my life.

21. _____ I like to work with numbers and figures.
 22. _____ Just looking at shapes of buildings and structures is pleasurable to me.
 23. _____ I like to hum, whistle and sing in the shower or when I'm alone.
 24. _____ I'm good at athletics.
 25. _____ I'd like to study the structure and logic of languages.
 26. _____ I'm usually aware of the expression on my face.
 27. _____ I'm sensitive to the expressions on other people's faces.
 28. _____ I stay "in touch" with my moods. I have no trouble identifying them.
 29. _____ I am sensitive to the moods of others.
 30. _____ I have a good sense of what others think of me.
-

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE SCORING SHEET

Place a check mark by each item you marked as "true." Add your totals. A total of four in any of the categories A through E indicates strong ability. In categories F and G a score of one or more means you have abilities as well.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Linguistic	Logical- Mathem atical	Musical	Spatial	Bodily- Kinesthetic	Intra- personal	Inter- personal

7 ___	4 ___	2 ___	1 ___	6 ___	26 ___	27 ___
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	--------	--------

8 ___	5 ___	3 ___	9 ___	13 ___	28 ___	29 ___
-------	-------	-------	-------	--------	--------	--------

14 ___	12 ___	10 ___	11 ___	15 ___		30 ___
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--	--------

18 ___	16 ___	20 ___	19 ___	17 ___		
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--	--

25 ___	21 ___	23 ___	22 ___	24 ___		
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--	--

Totals: ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Think/Pair/Share Hand Out

My Name: _____ My Partner's Name: _____

Date: _____ Class Period: _____

Prompt or Question	What I Thought	What My Partner Thought	What We Will Share

Appendix B: Permission to Conduct Study

Re: Permission Letter

To Whom It May Concern:

Denise Payton has permission to conduct research in our Performing and fine Arts Department at our University Site for her project: Effective Teaching in Higher Education for the 21st Century Adult Learner. We will be able to provide the contact information for the Fine Arts faculty members who have signed up for the faculty seminar on active learning strategies presented at our institution.

Sincerely

EL

Chair

Department of Performing and Fine Arts

Appendix C: Permission to Use Observation Instrument

Payton, Denise

From: Geoff Colvin <geoffcolvin@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2014 2:47 PM
To: Payton, Denise
Subject: RE: Use of DOIM instrument

Denise: I am responding to your request listed below. Please feel free to use the instrument I designed *Direct Observational Instructional Management* for your research into active learning styles and multiple intelligences, specifically in your proposal entitled: *Effective Teaching in Higher Education and the 21st Century Adult Learners*.

I wish you well in your study

Geoff Colvin

Dr. Colvin:

My name is Denise Payton and I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I would like permission to use your Direct Observational Instructional Management for my research into active learning styles and multiple intelligences. My proposal is entitled: *Effective Teaching in Higher Education and the 21st Century Adult Learner*. I am Director of Choral Activities at an HBCU and I would like to observe six (6) faculty members in the Department of Performing and Fine Arts before and after they have been introduced to active learning style strategies. I will be looking to see how they implement these strategies and the effect on student engagement in their classrooms.

Thank you for considering my request.

Denise Payton

Appendix D: Invitation Letter to Participants

Email Participation Request
TO: Potential Research Study Participants
From: Denise Murchison Payton

I appreciate the opportunity to invite you to participate in two rounds of data collection as part of the research work I am doing for my doctoral project at Walden University.

The purpose of this study is to understand faculty members' perceptions of action learning strategies. You are invited to participate because you have signed up for a seminar at Fayetteville State University about active learning strategies. Your participation would involve two face to face interviews with myself, the researcher, before and after you take the seminar. I would also like to observe your classroom before and after you attend the seminar.

Should you decide to participate, I want to assure you that all information you provide will be kept confidential. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identifiable and only group data and quotes will be presented. I will keep the research results in a locked drawer in my home office, and no one will have access to the records while I work on this project. Your participation is strictly voluntary and if you do choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequences. Should you decide to participate, the information you provide might be helpful for schools that wish to design future programs for faculty members.

If you would like to participate in this research study, please contact me at xxx.xxxx@xxx.xxx and we can set up a time to meet to go over your potential participation in this study. If you have any questions pertaining to this research study, please feel free to contact me off line at xxx-xxx-xxxx, or at xxx.xxxx@xxx.xxx

Sincerely,

Denise Murchison Payton

Appendix E: Consent Form

This study is being conducted by Denise Payton, who is a doctoral student at Walden University under the supervision of Dr. William Shecket, a faculty member in the EdD program. You were selected as a possible participant in this research because you are a colleague in the performing and fine arts and you have signed up to attend a seminar given by UOS this semester. Please read this form and ask questions before you agree to be in the study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to explore faculty members' perceptions of active learning techniques. It will then try to determine the degree to which teachers choose to implement these strategies in their classrooms and the effect on student engagement.

Participation:

Your participation in this research will include two interviews and two classroom observations. The interviews will require approximately 1 hour each. In addition, two of your classes will be observed, each for the entire 50 minutes of the class. It is not a requirement to use the strategies you learn in the seminar in your classroom. Interviews will be transcribed to ensure accuracy of what you said in the interview.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. However, if you do decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during or after the study. You may stop at any time. If you decide to withdraw your data will not be used, and all data that has been collected from you will be destroyed.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing. In addition, if you do decide to take part in this study, I will ensure that your information remains confidential by removing all identifiers unless you specifically and explicitly state otherwise.

The anticipated benefits of the research for the participants would be that you will have the opportunity to reflect on your responses to a teaching seminar on active learning strategies in a structured manner.

Payment:

There will not be any payment for participating within the study.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by keeping electronic data saved in a password protected database. All physical data, such as consent forms, will be kept separate from other data. Nothing but consent forms will have names of participants on them. Physical data will be kept in a locked cabinet that only the researcher has access to. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university, and will be destroyed afterwards.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via xxx.xxxx@xxxx.xxx or ____-____-____. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-xxx-xxxx, extension xxxxx. Walden University's approval number for this study is _____ and it expires on_____.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. If I have any questions now I may ask the researcher, Denise Payton. If I have questions later, I have her contact information. I also have the contact information of a Walden University representative if I have any questions about my rights.

I have a copy of this Consent Form to keep.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature . . . Date

Yes, I am interested in receiving a written summary of the results of this study when the research is completed.

Participant's Printed Name

Appendix F: Demographic Questionnaire

Are you an educator in the Fine Arts? Please circle one

Yes

No

What classes do you teach in the Fine Arts?

What is your rank? Please circle one

Professor

Associate

Assistant

Instructor

Lecturer

Other _____

What is your gender? _____

What is your ethnicity? _____

What is your highest earned degree?

How many years have you been teaching in the Fine Arts?

How many years have you been at the institution?

Are you tenured? Please circle one

Yes

No

Are you on tenure track? Please circle one

Yes

No

Appendix G: Observational Instrument

APPENDIX A		
Direct Observation Instructional Management Cover Sheet		
Date _____	Observation start time _____	End time _____
Observer _____	Teacher _____	Subject and level _____
Grade _____		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin-top: 5px;"> General setting and context description: </div>		
Interval length: 10 s		
Setting	Teacher action	Class engagement
On coding sheet, mark a slash per interval	On coding sheet, mark a slash per interval	On coding sheet, slash percentage and main type
L = Whole class S = Small group and independent work I = Independent work whole class T = Transition O = Social/other	Academics E = Explanation D = Direction A = Assessment Q = Question P = Positive feedback C = Correction R = Review Social behavior P = Precorrection R = Positive reinforcement C = Correction S = Supervision	M = Most (more than 75%) H = Half (approximately 50%) L = Less (less than 50%)

APPENDIX B
Categories of Observed Items With Definitions

Symbol	Item	Definition
Setting (most of the interval)		
L	Whole class	All students are involved in the activity.
S	Small group and independent work	Some students are engaged with the teacher while the rest of the class is working independently.
I	Independent work	Whole class is working independently.
T	Transition	Period during an activity change within the classroom, entering or exiting the classroom.
O	Social/other	Instruction or teacher directed activity is not occurring such as students sitting and waiting or a break.
Teacher action (each and any)		
E	Explanation	Teacher describes or explains some content related to the lesson or event.
D	Direction	Teacher presents information on what the students are required to do or makes a specific request related to the lesson or activity.
A	Assessment	Teacher checks work for correct responses by requiring whole class response such as writing a response, having students check their own work or others, or a response involving all students.
P	Positive feedback	The teacher acknowledges student responses as a class or individually, by praise, gestures, and/or delivery of reinforcers.
Q	Question	Teacher asks a discrete question involving single answer where one student responds and teacher continues.
C	Correction	Teacher provides information on how to obtain a correct response after errors have been identified with the lesson task or activity.
R	Review	Teacher discusses, explains what has been addressed or accomplished in the lesson and what may need to be addressed in the future.
Social behavior (each and any)		
P	Precorrection	Teacher provides information to students about expected behavior prior to the opportunity for students to engage in the behaviors such as reminders.
R	Positive reinforcement	Teacher provides positive feedback on social behavior such as praise, recognition, delivery of rewards.
C	Correction	Teacher addresses problem behavior such as prompts, redirection, naming the problem behavior (reprimand), warning, and delivery of negative consequence.
S	Supervision	Moving around looking at work, scanning the room or standing at the front scanning the room.
Class engagement		
M	Most	More than half of the students are engaged in the expected behavior.
H	Half	Approximately half the class is engaged in the expected behavior.
L	Less	Less than half the class is engaged in the expected behavior.

Appendix H: Interview Questions

Preobservation interview questions:

1. What are the teaching strategies you use in the classroom?
2. What are your evaluation strategies?
3. What do you think of active learning strategies?
4. What are some of the reasons you do not use them as much as your preferred method of content delivery?
5. Is there the anticipation of not covering enough material?
6. Does it require too much time to adapt your lessons to include these strategies?
7. Do you consider it entertainment instead of teaching?
8. How do you think your present strategies effect student engagement?
9. Is there anything you wish to add about these two methods of approach?

Postobservation interview questions:

1. What do you think of the strategies you learned in the seminar?
2. Have you tried these strategies in your classroom?
3. (If yes) In what ways do you think your students valued these active learning strategies?
4. (If yes) How do you think that your students responded to these strategies in terms of being engaged in the material? Can you say more?
5. (If not) Could you talk a bit more about why not?
6. If yes, what are your observations regarding the noise levels due to the nonpassive environment?
7. What do you think are the downsides to implementing these strategies in your classroom?

8. What do you think are the advantages to implementing these strategies in your classroom?
9. Will you strive to implement these strategies in more classes?
10. Has learning about these strategies moved you from your comfort zone and would you be willing to promote these ideas to other faculty?
11. How would your syllabi change to include active learning strategies?