

## **ALISE Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty Luncheon Discussion Summary**

### **1. Facilitating student discussions that promote critical thinking and reflection**

- What are some principles for developing effective discussion questions?
  - Explain the question in depth
  - State expectations
  - Ask open-ended questions ... follow up with “why” and require a substantive response
  - Be sure relevant materials are available
  - Frame it in context
  - Connect it with immediate topic
  - Play devil’s advocate
  - Give a broad “these are things to keep in mind” overview
  - Present information first. Then ask question.
  - Include tangential topics or different perspectives
  - Be provocative
- How can the instructor prepare the group for an effective discussion?
  - Introduce topical statement, talk and then ask question
  - Start with a provocative statement
  - If you know personal information about students, tweak the question to address their interests
  - If there’s silence, say, “I’ll go first.” If that doesn’t start discussion, say, “What do you think about that?”
- What is the role of the instructor during the discussion?
  - Be a guide
  - Be a participant
  - Play devil’s advocate
  - Make sure everyone contributes
  - Keep conversations flowing
  - Stop incessant talkers/writers
  - Instructor participates in the discussion – per post? At end?
  - Use running analogy

- How can all students be involved?
  - Start the course by asking, “Who are you?” “What are your career goals?”
  - By making this an assignment, all students become involved and you can ask directed questions.
  - Call them individually
  - Post a question that mentions them by name
  - Email them
- How can students be assessed on their participation in the discussion?
  - Grading rubric
  - In syllabus, mention that discussions are graded
  - Respond to comments via email
  - Have the group determine
  - Develop survey

## **2. Designing and assessing effective group projects**

- What are some of the challenges of group projects?
  - Students don’t like group work!
  - Managing interpersonal tensions
  - Dealing with students’ suspicions, fears of group work
  - Group work operates differently online and offline
  - Do non-traditional students struggle more with demands of group work?
  - Student resistance
  - Varied skill levels
  - Varied knowledge base
  - Reluctance doing online
  - Worries about unseen classmates
  - Assessment
- What are the benefits to students of working on group projects?
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Experience applicable to work environment
  - Familiarity with tools, methods, evaluations of collaboration
  - Preparation for professional life

- Building learning community
  - Maximizing multiple strengths
  - Learning tools, skills, knowledge from each other
- What are some options for the formation of the groups?
  - Students choose
    - Pro: they take responsibility for their group formation
    - Con: Can lead to cliques
  - Instructors choose
    - Pro: Can group by topic, tech savviness, interpersonal abilities
    - Con: Students may resent or not understand group formation
- What are the important elements to include in the design of a group project?
  - Means of assessment
    - As a group
    - As individual
  - Projects that can be broken down into parts
  - Take advantage of collaborative tools (e.g., wikis)
  - Self/group evaluations
  - Confidential instructor mediation
  - Assigning roles
  - Using tools
- How can the work of the group and individual members be fairly assessed?
  - Individual grades
  - Group grades
  - Project grades
  - Can be combined
  - Can be done by instructor, student, and/or group
  - Reflective writing assignment
  - Making students' feedback public/private
  - Use assessment within groups as a way of teaching sensitive feedback
  - Use evaluations of group members
  - Using tools to maximize documentation
  - Individual reflection

### **3. Implementing time management and workload strategies for faculty**

- Which elements of teaching a course demand the most time?
  - Planning and grading
  - Course creation/development and revision
- What can be done to make the course development process more efficient and productive?
  - Find syllabi at other institutions
  - Sit in/look in on other courses
  - Don't reinvent the wheel
  - Online "course" for new adjuncts
  - Seek help from colleagues
  - Teach courses in which we have expertise and interest
- What are some strategies for design of assignments and assessment that will provide substantive feedback to students while not overwhelming the faculty member?
  - Group projects
  - Rubrics
  - Assignments that build on each other
  - Multiple perspectives
  - Group work: grade once
  - Peer assessment
- How can a faculty member structure their communication with students to provide necessary support while managing time commitments?
  - Variety of technology (e.g., BlackBoard IM)
  - Set boundaries/expectations for turnaround time and time of day replying to emails
  - Hold virtual office hours
  - Have discussion board: they ask questions that other students can answer for you
- What are some methods of efficiently returning assessment feedback to students?
  - Turnitin.com features for re-using common comments