

## **Experience It Yourself, ITUE, January 19-20, 2005**

Based on gender, discipline, and home institution, participants (~70) will be assigned to tables ahead of time. Each group should have at least one member from the University of Delaware.

### **Introduction**

**9:00 – 9:10 AM (George)** Introduce ITUE Leaders and the session. Briefly, have members of the various groups introduce themselves within their groups and very briefly say why they can to this ITUE workshop. Describe provide an overview of the program and this “Experience It Yourself” session. It will put teachers in the role of students. We are using a new problem specially written for today.

### **Management of “Deflating Grady.”**

**Overview:** This multi-stage (progressive disclosure) PBL problem was written for a faculty development workshop. It addresses the issue of grade inflation in the context of an upset faculty member whose department chair has suggested that his grades are high because of lowered standards. It seeks to have participants define grade inflation and analyze the issues that surround it in stakeholder groups before proposing ways to deal with it in a jigsaw format. The problem includes elements of written and oral communication, analysis of data, and on-line research.

### **Part I. Maintaining Standards. (30 minutes)**

The purpose of this stage is to introduce the topic and provide an opportunity to have everyone think through what they mean by “grade inflation”. It includes a pre-writing assignment.

**9:10 – 9:40 AM** After a 10 minute introduction of the ITUE Leaders and a brief overview of what “Experience It Yourself” means, we introduce the problem. Distribute the handouts for each part at the beginning of its scheduled time.

**Individual and Group Work:** The home groups will read Part I and each member will write down their definition of “grade inflation”. Then group members will compare their definitions and construct a consensus definition that they will write on poster paper and post on the boards around the room. This activity should take about 20 minutes.

**Report out:** Representatives from several groups will each summarize their definition and why they settled on it. It will not be possible to have every group present their definition. Ask for volunteers to introduce dimensions of their definition that may not be evident in other definitions.

### **Part II. Midnight Thoughts (15 minutes)**

The purpose of this stage is to brainstorm and think about the multiple explanations for grade inflation or even challenge its existence.

**9:40 – 9:55 AM Group discussion:** Each group should generate a number of issues that relate to grade inflation. We anticipate that there will be lively discussion and that different groups will go off in different directions. Hopefully, multiple issues will emerge such as:

- students are better,
- the number of women taking courses has increased and they tend to do better than men,
- the problem is with a few disciplines,
- there are more competency-based courses like undergraduate research or student teaching,
- pressure to get into medical school and other professional schools, teaching ratings,
- new teaching methods improve student performance,
- faculty don't care about grades,
- standards are lowering,
- Parents challenging professors and administrators

We do not plan to have a reporting out time for this because we feel that it would require too much time. ITUE leaders should circulate among groups to monitor discussion and keep groups on schedule for the task.

### **Part III – What's the Evidence? (25 minutes)**

The purpose of this stage is to provide focus, interject data (numeracy) into the discussion, and to set the stage for groups seeking data for defense of their positions later. It also will introduce the concept of learning issues.

**9:55 – 10:20 AM Group discussion:** Let groups discuss the graph for about 15 minutes and then have them report out. Generate a list of learning issues on the screen.

### **Part IV – Who Cares? (10 minutes)**

The purpose of this short part is to identify stakeholders and setup jigsaw format for stakeholder groups.

**10:20-10:30 AM** Groups match statements with stakeholder groups which will take about 5 minutes. There is overlap in stakeholder interests and thus the matching is not entirely obvious but can be deduced with discussion and the process of elimination.

Then we give the following instructions: Each member of your group needs to select a different stakeholder group. During the break, move to different tables identified with each stakeholder group. There the stakeholder groups will discuss what information they need to gather and decide what position is on grade inflation. The instructions for Part V that related to reflective thinking and group problem-solving are derived in part from a structured format designed by Prof. Charles Pavitt, Department of Communications, University of Delaware.

## **Break**

**10:30-10:40 AM**

### **Part IV continued. (20 minutes)**

The purpose of this segment is for the members of the jigsaw-stakeholder groups to introduce themselves to each other and to organize themselves for the one-hour afternoon session where they will be working together to generate and support a position on grade inflation that is consistent with their group's interests. This is done **without** the prompting and focusing questions that lead off Part V in the afternoon. The jigsaw format early in the program provides an additional opportunity for to introduce participants to each other.

**10:40 – 11:00 AM** Group discussion and planning for PM session.

### **Part V – What's Our Position? (60 minutes)**

The purpose of this stage is for the stakeholder groups to analyze the problem of grade inflation in the context of their stakeholder group and establish a position on grade inflation. This part will introduce the use of wireless laptop computers for using Internet to locate data and construct the case for their position.

**2:30 – 3:30 PM** Participants return after lunch (12:00-1:30 PM) to their jigsaw (stakeholder) groups. After the Group Dynamics 101 session (1:30 – 2:30 PM) Part V instructions are distributed and with two wireless notebook computers per group, they proceed to pursue the questions and data they have identified as important to their case.

### **Part VI – Formulating a Plan (75+ minutes)**

The purpose of this stage is to regroup and have the different stakeholders become involved in a negotiated proposal on how to deal with grade inflation in a way different from that adopted at Princeton.

**3:30 – 4:00 PM (plus overnight and 8:30-9:30 AM next day)** Participants return to their original groups. We show a short 2.1 minute video segment of a University of Delaware faculty senate meeting dealing with grade inflation and then distribute the final (Part VI) assignment. The participants may work on their projects in the evening as time, interest, computers, and space permit. They will have an hour in the morning to prepare before making a presentation.

The morning presentation session will be separated into two with six groups. Groups 1-6 will remain in 208 Gore Hall with one leader and Groups 7-12 will move to 303 Gore with a different leader. The remaining ITUE leaders should divide between the two rooms as well.

At the beginning of the breakout presentations, the ground rules need to be stated explicitly-

1. maximum of 5 minutes (timed with an alarm),

2. no more than 4 PowerPoint slides, evaluations sheets need to be distributed, and
3. specific peer reporter/evaluators need to be identified.

A couple of minutes of discussion should follow each presentation. To the extent possible, the presentations need to be loaded on the computers ahead of time.

Distribute a rubric for evaluating the presentations.

If time is available after all six presentations, some processing of the “Experience It Yourself” session can begin, but more will occur in the following session on, What is a Good Problem?