

Problem-Based Learning: Experience It Yourself



*Institute for Transforming
Undergraduate Education
University of Delaware*



George Watson
ghw@udel.edu

Mark Serva
servam@udel.edu

www.udel.edu/pbl/hartford



What Is PBL?

“The principal idea behind PBL is that the starting point for learning should be a problem, a query, or a puzzle that the learner wishes to solve.”

Boud, D. (1985) PBL in perspective. In “PBL in Education for the Professions,” D. J. Boud (ed); p. 13.



Deflating Grady – Part I

Read over the e-mail exchange and discuss the ideas it raises about grade inflation.

As a group, compose a definition of grade inflation and be prepared to present it.

Be prepared to “report out” in 10 minutes.



Deflating Grady – Part II

Read over the information presented, and be prepared to report out on your answers to either question 1 or question 2.

Be prepared to “report out” in 10 minutes



Questions are Critical

“...once you have learned to ask questions – relevant and appropriate and substantial questions – you have learned how to learn and no one can keep you from learning whatever you want or need to know.”

Neil Postman & Charles Weingartner
in *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, 1969



Characteristics of Good Learning Issues

Presented in the form of a question or series of questions.

Focused so that it seeks specific information.

Constructed so that it asks an answerable question.

Pursues information that is relevant to the problem.

Goes beyond superficial knowledge to probe conceptual issues.

Often set in a context that provides direction. Why is the question important?



Deflating Grady – Part III

Take a look at the graph from gradeinflation.com:

- According to your group’s definition, is this evidence for grade inflation?
- Make a list of questions (learning issues) you have about these data.

Be prepared to “report out” in 10 min.



Deflating Grady – Part IV

Who cares about grade inflation?

Match the stakeholders with their comment.

Each person in your group select a different stakeholder and wait for instructions.

Watch video clip of faculty senate meeting.