2021 Dual Credit Spring Institute: Supporting Student Success in an Ever-Changing Landscape

Brian Smentkowski, PhD
Director, University of Idaho Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Our goal is today is to...

• Think about Dual Credit at the programmatic and instructional level

• Explore strategies for improving the learning experiences of Dual Credit students generally, and to assure robust university-level learning experiences specifically

• Discuss the development, distribution, alignment and delivery of content while focusing on learning, learners, and pathways to UI.
Session Format

- Change: Perceptual and Behavioral
- Teaching for Learning
- Significant Learning Experiences
- Mindset
- Critical Thinking and Critical Reflection
- Metacognition and Self Regulated Learning
- Pulling it all Together
- Resources
Exercise 1: The Ice Breaker

• In the Dual Credit context, what does interaction look like?

• What should it look like?

• What’s missing from/needed in Dual Credit to enhance the bond, improve the learning experience, and make UI the school of first choice?
We need to change our thinking & behavior...

From this
- Dual Credit Teachers
- U of I Dual Credit Liaison

The Course

To this
- A significant U of I learning experience
- Dual Credit Teachers
- U of I Faculty Liaison

Learner-centered collaboration and interaction
But How?
By Teaching for Learning

- **Successful students** grasp content, reveal knowledge, work through difficult challenges, and are aware of their own learning and how to enhance it.
- **Impactful faculty** guide and challenge them along multiple dimensions.
- **Meaningful interactions** extend the UI experience into the highschool environment.
Exercise 2: Creating Significant Dual Credit Learning Experiences

Questions:

• What do you prioritize in your teaching?
  • Why?

• What do you expect your students to do?
  • Why?
A Framework:
Do skills matter? Which ones? How’s this going?
Mindset also matters

- “The view you adopt of yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life”
  - --Carol S. Dweck, *Summary of Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*

- What are the implications and applications of this statement to the learning and lives of our students?
- How about us?
Why it matters

• Especially at this critical (and young...ish) stage of their development, many students don’t (yet!) have the opportunity to think about their thinking and learn about their learning.

• **Think about the implications of this:** “…research on younger undergraduate students reveals [that] students take little or no responsibility for their own learning, blaming their shortcomings in achievement on their ‘ineffective’ instruction and the ‘too advanced’ or irrelevant course material...Furthermore, they admit to having little or no interest in learning, certainly not for learning’s own sake...Reinforcing their avoidance of responsibility for their learning is their widespread belief that learning should not require effort” (Linda Nilson, *Creating Self-Regulated Learners*).

• So, what can we do?
Fostering a Growth Mindset

Growth Mindset
Intelligence can be developed

Leaders to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to …
- embrace challenges
- persist in the face of setbacks
- see effort as the path to mastery
- learn from criticism
- find lessons and inspiration in the success of others

As a result, you reach new higher levels of achievement.

Fixed Mindset
“Failure is the limit of my abilities”
“I am either good at it or I’m not”
“My abilities are unchanging”
“I can either do it or I can’t”
“My potential is predetermined”
“When I’m frustrated, I give up”

“Feedback and criticism are personal”
“I stick to what I know”

“Failure is an opportunity to grow”
GROWTH MINDSET
“I can learn to do anything I want”
“Challenges help me to grow”
“My effort and attitude determine my abilities”
“Feedback is constructive”
“I am inspired by the success of others”
“I like to try new things”
How? 4 Easy Steps

1. Don't Rush to "I Can't". When people start a new task or are doing one that is very difficult, it is sometimes tempting to say "I can't do this" or "I can't be bothered". With a bit of effort, you might surprise yourself by how well you can do the task and how much you enjoy it.

2. The Power of "Yet". This simple word can have a big impact. There is a huge difference between saying "I am not good at this" and "I am not good at this yet". By adding the word "yet", it suggests you may get there with some hard work and resilience.

3. Ask Yourself "What would I do differently next time?". This is a great question to ask after a setback. It stops you dwelling on the past and helps you reflect and focus on what you need to improve on in the future.

4. Failing Better. Everyone experiences failure at some stage in their life. But can you fail better? This doesn’t mean failing more often. One way to fail better is if you ask someone for feedback and then use it.

5. Try New Things. Having a sense of curiosity and courage can be really helpful. It can help you learn new things. Sometimes new equals the unknown which equals scary. But it doesn’t have to be this way. Sometimes new experiences can be the most rewarding and most exciting.

• Make time for learning to happen
• Create opportunities to examine what’s working and what’s not in the learning process
• Make it part of the every-day norm
• Challenge and inspire your students and give them a chance to exchange error for truth, to grow, and to earn credit for that effort...because that is the real evidence of learning!
Exercise 3: Cultivating a Growth Mindset

• A cluster of students in your _____ class are struggling.

• They argue that they are “just not good at_____”, that the work is too hard, the material is complicated, and that the class seems irrelevant. When they get bad grades, some of them blame you, others blame themselves, all hoping that they’ll do better on the next assignment. Hoping...

• What do you do?
Emphasize Critical Thinking

Active learning, case-based learning, problem-based learning...
DEAL with it

Incorporate aspects of the DEAL model into your assignments:

- **Describe** an experience
- **Examine** it through the lens of academic concepts or strategies
- **Articulate** Learning by explaining what was learned, how, when, and why it matters.

Give students space to discuss how, when, and why their assumptions were either validated or challenged and what they did about it.
Critical Thinking Strategies

- Discussions
- Debates
- Simulations
- Case-based learning
- Problem-based learning
- Reading, writing, research
- Experiments
- Experiential learning
- Journals
- Peer review
- Cognitive (and affective?) wrappers
- What else?
Link Critical Thinking to Critical Reflection

• Critical Reflection is the “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends”.

• It involves “thinking about our thinking” (Dewey, How we Think).

• Do you let your students do this??
Link Metacognition to Self Regulated Learning

- **Metacognition** pertains to one’s conscious control over one’s cognitive processes...an awareness and knowledge of about one’s own thinking (Nilson, *Creating Self-Regulated Learners*, p. 5).

--*while*--

- **Self-regulation** encompasses the monitoring and managing of one’s cognitive processes as well as the awareness of and control over one’s emotions, motivations, behaviors, and environment as related to learning (ibid).
  - *This is where we want to be.*
Don’t forget to focus on the learning!

- “Dense content [is] a barrier to significant learning” (Nilson and Goodson, Online Teaching at its Best).
- Like technology, content must be functionally related to the accomplishment of learning goals.
- Consider:
  - The volume of content – less is usually more.
  - Different formats to get the brain firing on all cylinders – and to appeal to diverse learners and enhance engagement.
  - Timing...is usually everything. Revealing the right content, the right way, and at the right time.
  - Expectations – clearly articulated, understood, and goal-oriented.
  - Actually teaching... for learning – don’t rely on publishers.
Ok, so now – what can you do together?

Collaboratively, we can...

...so this area can grow

A significant U of I learning experience

Learner-centered collaboration and interaction

Dual Credit Teachers

U of I Faculty Liaison
Appendix

Tips, Guides, and Cheat Sheets

Applied strategies for creating significant, engaged, and self-regulated learning experiences
Find Out What They Know and What They Don’t
Consider these Learning Strategies for New(er) Material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CATs and LATS, like “quick quizzes”</td>
<td>Set aside 5 minutes of class time for low-stakes quizzes to help students practice retrieving and processing newly learned information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed Practice</td>
<td>Allow students to work on skills and knowledge acquisition over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Productive Struggle</td>
<td>Offer challenging tasks that require creative and/or critical thinking skills. The one who does the work does the learning!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2-1</td>
<td>Let students write down 3 things they learned (potentially from the previous class session), 2 things they found interesting, and 1 thing they have questions about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket In-and-Out the Door</td>
<td>Have students present a question or finding from previous session to current session, and at the end, share one thing they learned or didn’t quite grasp today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Use technology APPROPRIATELY and as part of the authentic learning experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I Learned, not What I Learned</td>
<td>Retrieval is critical to new learning (read Make it Stick), but don’t let the students rely on you as the source of all knowledge and information! Learning is about discovery. Get them to think about how they learn, not just what they learn. DEAL with it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
50 CATs and 50 LATs

• **CATS: Classroom Assessment Techniques** —easy, often ungraded activities to keep your students engaged and allow you to assess their knowledge, performance, progress, understanding.

• **LATS: Learning Assessment Techniques** —a bit more formal, often graded, still pretty easy to integrate early and often.
8 Strategies for Critical Reflection, Metacognition, and Self Regulated Learning

- For every content/skills-based assignment, add a metacognitive component.
- Consider simulations, especially ones that require students to assume a role or identity different than their authentic selves.
- Shift conditions/contexts/student roles.
- Consider critical reflection journals
- End of semester report/poster on learning and content awareness
- Cognitive wrappers
- DEAL with it
- Establish a Daily/Topical Routine

Think AND not OR: Students can learn the thing, the stuff, and also learn about their learning
The Daily Routine

For every topic/session, students can do the following:

- **Preassessment**: Require students to examine their own/current thinking. What do I already know this topic that could guide my learning? What are my operative assumptions?

- **Muddiest Point**: Require students to identify confusion. What was the one thing, or sequence of things, that confused or confounded you?

- **Retrospective Postassessment**: Require students to recognize conceptual change. Exchange error for truth or see something from another angle. Previously, I thought ___; now I know that it actually is___.

- **Reflective Journals**: Requires students to monitor and chronical their own thinking, questions, answers, and changes.

- **Give students an opportunity to know when and why and how their thinking changed.**
This template was designed to help students better understand their own learning—what’s working, what’s not, and why...and what they/we can do about it. Note that it emphasizes REFLECTION, FEEDBACK, and ADJUSTMENTS

**REFLECTION**

1. **How much total time** did you spend preparing for/working on this assignment or project?
2. **When** did you prepare for/work on it? How did you spread out your preparation? USE TIME LINE TOOL: [https://timeline.knightlab.com/](https://timeline.knightlab.com/) Can be used for collaborative projects.
3. Did you make time for thinking and reflecting? If so, when, how much, and what breakthroughs? Remember the 5 day rule.
4. **How did you prepare?**
5. **How much time was spent:**
   a. Conducting research?  
      i. Did you work with a librarian?  
   b. Reading course material  
   c. Re-reading course material  
   d. Working independently  
   e. Working in groups  
   f. Pausing  
   g. Thinking  
   h. Reflecting  
   i. Note taking  
   j. Drafting  
   k. Editing  
   l. Problem solving  
   m. Memorizing  
   n. Brainstorming  
   o. Practicing  
   p. Other  

**USING FEEDBACK**

- First, **GIVE GOOD FEEDBACK**.
- This can come in a variety of forms—what do you do?
- It can come from other sources, like their peers.

*Based on the feedback,*

- What went well/what’s working?
- What went wrong/what kind of mistakes did you make?
- When you review the feedback, do you think that you lost points because of...
- Trouble understanding the instructions/assignment? (Lack of clarity or direction/misunderstanding; unclear expectations)
- Trouble understanding concepts
- Trouble understanding or remembering processes or techniques
- Misapplication of techniques? (doing the wrong thing the right way)
- Carelessness
- Lack of preparation in class or on your own
- Time limits/management/not enough time given (explain)
- Frustration / anxiety
- Trouble with format / assignment type (eg, writing, problem solving, collaborative, performative)
- Other?

**ADJUSTMENTS**

1. Name at least three things you can/will do differently next time.
2. Assess if these changes work.
3. What will help you learn or demonstrate your knowledge or ability most effectively?
4. Propose alternative formats?

• On how to argue constructively: https://www.theatlantic.com/.../erisology-the.../586534/


• On intellectual humility: https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2019/1/4/17989224/intellectual-humility-explained-psychology-replication?fbclid=IwAR04E0yPnR3gGcmgOVTm7hB80OM9cdeS2cFYh52TdQtaFxvxnFTWpWFQwU

• On why facts don’t change our minds: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/02/27/why-facts-dont-change-our-minds?utm_social-type=owned&mbid=social_facebook&utm_brand=tny&utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR2_iH9WGPkKHvLPz4VbwvAqPQI_bIEV3GyPtKlyKJCzZ1aZN1kD8lcc9Nk

• On teaching students how to learn: https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2019/02/19/advice-faculty-members-how-teach-students-how-learn-opinion#YFomcVOQ3a8_link

“Read everything, think hard, write a lot”. Think critically as a habit. Debate everything!