eLearning & Distance Education

iDESIGN
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Engaging in Active Learning

What is Active Learning?

Active learning involves students participating in the process of learning. Instead of putting students in a lecture hall or a reading room where they receive information verbally and visually, students are presented with opportunities and activities that engage them in receiving the information and participating in the process via reflection, doing activities related to learning, as well as creating artifacts that flow back into the knowledge base.

Students learn more and retain their learning longer if they acquire it in an active rather than a passive manner. According to National Survey of Student Engagement (http://nsse.iub.edu) who examined student engagement by various learning activities, students who participate in collaborative learning activities are better engaged.

How can I encourage Active Learning?

By providing engaging experiences for students where they are actively participating in rich learning experiences such as:

- debates
- role playing or dramatizations
- simulations
- service learning
- situational observations
- authentic place/context-based projects
- game playing
- digital story telling
- producing multimedia elements such as videos

By requiring reflective dialogue with one's self or others such as in:

- journaling/blogging
- learning portfolios
- peer-review
- collaboration in a larger community of practice

By using appropriate, concrete, and understandable examples.

- helps students find meaning in the material
- encourages light competition

By providing a positive and open learning environment such as:

- giving frequent, early, personal, positive feedback to students
- creating an atmosphere that is positive and open
- helping students feel that they are valued members of the learning community
- sharing your enthusiasm

By providing good presentation and content of course material:

- present organized course materials
- materials have appropriate level of difficulty
- provide variety that engages different modalities
- materials are relevant

Finding the Right Tool

http://distance.uaf.edu/go/best-tech

http://www.mindmeister.com/9002694/tools-to-enhance-your-personal-learning-environment

Showcase

- For some examples of elearning courses that include various active learning components visit: http://idesign.uaf.edu/showcase/.

Resources

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Get the Full NSSE 2011 Report [PDF]

Prove*It: A database of Peer Reviewed Research Offering Validation of Effective and Innovative Teaching. This is an online index and search engine of research for undergraduate STEM course instruction (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), indexed by learning outcomes and instructional strategy.

For more information on this topic, please see: http://iteachu.uaf.edu/manage-learners/
Contact us at: http://distance.uaf.edu/go/iteachu-contact

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