

Chapter 1 : UNF - The Cross-Disciplinary Program

/'Cross-Faculty Interdisciplinary Work or How to Work with the Others'. Interdisciplinary learning and teaching in higher education: theory and practice. Interdisciplinary learning and teaching in higher education: theory and practice.

We rarely explain to students why the school day is designed as it is. It should be no surprise then that students look at the arbitrary divisions for reading, math, social studies, science, art, music, and physical education and begin to define the subject areas as separate bodies of knowledge with little relationship to one another. As Mike moves into junior and senior high, the subject matter delineations will become even more entrenched as the academic areas are forced into minute time blocks taught by individual specialists. It is no wonder that many secondary school students complain that school is irrelevant to the larger world. In the real world, we do not wake up in the morning and do social studies for 50 minutes. The adolescent begins to realize that in real life we encounter problems and situations, gather data from all of our resources, and generate solutions. The fragmented school day does not reflect this reality. The British philosopher Lionel Elvin uses an analogy to describe the problem of the false time constraints of the school day: When you are out walking, nature does not confront you for three quarters of an hour only with flowers and in the next only with animals p. Having examined various models and approaches to interdisciplinary design for the past 15 years, I have made some observations. Although teachers have good intentions when they plan interdisciplinary courses, these courses frequently lack staying power. Two problems in content selection often plague courses: Many units become a sampling of knowledge from each discipline. If the subject is Ancient Egypt, there will be a bit of history about Ancient Egypt, a bit of literature, a bit of the arts, and so forth. Hirsch and Bloom have criticized this approach for its lack of focus. Unlike the disciplines that have an inherent scope and sequence used by curriculum planners, there is no general structure in interdisciplinary work. Curriculum developers themselves must design a content scope and sequence for any interdisciplinary unit or course. Not only does the curriculum design suffer from a lack of clarity, but real tensions can emerge among teachers. Some feel highly territorial about their subjects and are threatened as new views of their subject are promoted. There is a need for both interdisciplinary and discipline-field perspectives in design. To avoid these two problems, effective interdisciplinary programs must meet two criteria. They must have carefully conceived design features: They must use both discipline-field-based and interdisciplinary experiences for students in the curriculum. Chapter 2, on design options, spells out the range of these possibilities. To simply list a set of considerations for selecting interdisciplinary content would be to avoid wrestling with the complexities and possibilities for interdisciplinary work. Davis, social studies teacher, and Mrs. Valasquez, English teacher, are sitting in the faculty lounge and decide to do a unit together, there is a chance that their work will fall prey to both the potpourri and the polarity problems. It is essential that they take time to reflect on some fundamental questions. These questions are spelled out in the rest of this chapter in order 1 to establish the need for interdisciplinary possibilities, 2 to define terms used in the field, and 3 to present a set of assumptions to guide effective practice. Why Look at Curriculum Integration? Over the past few years, the interest in and need for curriculum integration has intensified throughout the country for several reasons. If you look at one field, such as science, you see the remarkable degree of specialization that has resulted from research and practice. Each area of the curriculum has the blessing and burden of growth. The curriculum planner must wrestle not only with what should be taught but what can be eliminated from the curriculum. In English, there are new writers, new books, and new interpretations to consider every year. In the social sciences, there are difficult questions of selecting focal cultures, for we obviously cannot study every country in the world. Then there are the annual state education mandates that get passed down to schools based on current problems. For example, many states now require a curriculum covering AIDS. Drug prevention curriculums have been on the books for a number of years in many states. Sex education and family life curriculums now are an integral part of the public school domain in some areas of the country. These are critical topics, but they do add pressure to the school schedule. The length of the school day in the United States has stayed basically about the same since the s. We need to rethink the ways we select the various areas of study. Knowledge will not stop growing, and

the schools are bursting at the seams. Frequently, state requirements are stated in terms of minutes per week. Students feel this fragmentation keenly. One of my favorite means of beginning an assessment of a secondary school is to follow one student through the day. It is easy to forget how, 8 times a day, students leap out of their seats every 40 minutes and rush for 5 minutes to another setting, another subject, another teacher, another set of students. Relevance of Curriculum If we are trying to devise a means of driving students out of school, we obviously are succeeding. Recent estimates suggest that, nationally, 25 percent of students drop out every year and in urban areas as many as 40 percent. Something is very wrong. A common concern of students is the irrelevance of their course work in their lives out of school. They find it difficult to understand why they need math when most of their instruction is based on a textbook used in isolation from its applications. The fragmentation of the day only compounds the dilemma as students never have the chance to explore a subject in depth. The relevancy issue also strikes a deeper chord. Only in school do we have 43 minutes of math and 43 minutes of English and 43 minutes of science. Outside of school, we deal with problems and concerns in a flow of time that is not divided into knowledge fields. We get up in the morning and confront the whole of our lives. It is here that relevancy comes into play. It is not that schools should avoid dealing with specific disciplines; rather, they also need to create learning experiences that periodically demonstrate the relationship of the disciplines, thus heightening their relevancy. There is a need to actively show students how different subject areas influence their lives, and it is critical that students see the strength of each discipline perspective in a connected way. Out of this concern for relevance arises another key area that has been the subject of debate for the past few years: Some argue that there should be a body of knowledge that is passed on from one generation to the next that deals with our classics and with the basics of our culture: The danger in this line of reasoning is to fall prey to the polarity problem. Discounting interdisciplinary efforts as attempts at relevancy at the expense of the classics is simplistic and only heightens the polarity. The attempts at interdisciplinary work that seem to be most successful are those that address the polarity question in a different way. No matter what the content, we can design active linkages between fields of knowledge. We can teach the works of Shakespeare with an eye to the history of the times, the arts, the values, the role of science, and the zeitgeist rather than simply sticking with specific passages. The student who does not possess a literary bent may encounter King Lear in another subject area. Integrated curriculum attempts should not be seen as an interesting diversion but as a more effective means of presenting the curriculum, whether you wish to teach Plato or feminist literature. The curriculum becomes more relevant when there are connections between subjects rather than strict isolation. They rightly ask us to provide a solid and thorough understanding of history and at the same time to embrace an interdisciplinary perspective beyond. Properly conceived, history includes the history of ideas, cultural developments, and social, political, and economic movements. It includes the evolution of diverse cultures and the changing relationships among peoples, races, religions, and beliefs p. They recommend a consistent chronological structure to history instruction, which is obviously the sensible route. But, more importantly, their definition of history is encompassing rather than limiting and I believe would enlarge the relevancy of history for the high school student. Ravitch warns us to beware unwise practices under the banner of relevancy. She is quite right. The definition that she has shaped with Chester Finn serves as a worthy prototype for a dynamic view of history that is, in fact, interdisciplinary. A doctor cannot be trained only in physiology and the biology of the body; a doctor treats the whole human being. The ethical questions that confront doctors have a great deal to do with the effectiveness of their treatments on patients. Business schools are providing ethics courses, education schools are providing business administration courses, and so forth. Basically, we have become a specialized world, but the pendulum is swinging toward some balance, so that we may draw from the range of fields to better serve our specific fields. The renewed trend in the schools toward interdisciplinarity will help students better integrate strategies from their studies into the larger world. Definitions that Clarify Practice Many interpretations of the curriculum terminology are used in discussing the integration of knowledge. It is essential that there be some fundamental agreement for the meanings of the words that will be used to describe the plan that emerges from the design efforts or there can be real confusion. The following are some terms whose definitions attempt to illustrate the shades of difference between conceptions of knowledge. In Chapter 2 I attempt to provide some practical

applications for a number of these terms. A specific body of teachable knowledge with its own background of education, training, procedures, methods, and content areas Piaget The starting point for all discussions about the nature of knowledge in our schools should be a thorough understanding of the disciplines. As Lawton suggests, each discipline asks different questions. There are distinct frames of reference and kinds of statements, and each of these suggests unique procedures and end results that are in fact the discipline fields. The British thinker Hirst has studied how best to present knowledge systems to young people. In his view, each discipline is a form of knowledge with separate and distinct characteristics. Within each form are unique concepts and propositions that have tests to validate their truth. The motivation for discipline divisions is in part based on the notion that the disciplines encourage efficient learning. The structure of the disciplines is necessary for knowledge acquisition. It is fundamental in order to learn how things are related Bruner The advantage of the disciplines is that they permit schools to investigate with systematic attention to the progressive mastery of closely related concepts and patterns of reasoning Hirst and Peters

Chapter 2 : Cross-Faculty Inquiry in Education | Office of Research in Education ORE

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Chapter 3 : Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Theory and Practice - CRC Press

Welcome to the web site of the Office of Interdisciplinary & Cross Campus Affairs at UCLA. We work with leadership, deans, faculty and staff to promote and to improve interdisciplinary efforts across the UCLA campus.

Chapter 4 : Professor at School for Cross Faculty Studies ()

PhD in Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education The CCFI doctoral program is an individualized, research-orientated doctoral program for students interested in undertaking research that is interdisciplinary or trans-disciplinary in nature.

Chapter 5 : The Growing Need for Interdisciplinary Curriculum Content

'Cross-Faculty Interdisciplinary Work or How to Work with the Others' By Susana Lorenzo and S. Lorenzo-Zamorano. Publisher: Routledge. Year:

Chapter 6 : Interdisciplinary Programs - CMU - Carnegie Mellon University

International Studies at UNF is an academic program and the center of an interdisciplinary community of faculty, students and staff from across the campus. Together we examine the economic, environmental, cultural, political and technological forces that shape today's world.

Chapter 7 : Cross-disciplinary: Cross-disciplinary â€¢ Penn Law

She has been a member of the Holy Cross faculty since What is your proudest accomplishment at this point in your career? My proudest accomplishment relates to my work as a member of the Comparative Cultures Seminar (CCS) in Greece, a teaching and research project connected to Harvard Summer School of which I was a founding member in

Chapter 8 : UCLA Interdisciplinary & Cross Campus Affairs

Cross-faculty Interdisciplinary Work - or How to Work with the 'Others', Susana Lorenzo-Zamorano, University of Manchester, England 7. Staff development for Interdisciplinary Programmes, Gwen van der Velden, University of Bath, England.

Chapter 9 : UNSW Sydney to invest \$m in new institutes - Biotech

Helping our students work together in cross faculty/interdisciplinary teams will provide students with: a broader range of skills to take advantage of a world full of new possibilities opportunities to gain enterprising skills.