Examining COIL as a Signature Pedagogy for Educational Leaders

Linda Rae Markert  ❖  March 19, 2015
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Expanding Landscape of COIL Practitioners, Networks & Hubs
Revised Abstract

The concept of “signature pedagogies” provides a theoretical framework for examining various COIL characteristics. The dimensions, habits and features of signature pedagogies might ultimately provide leadership candidates with authentic opportunities to develop cultural competency.

A globally networked academic experience has been added to the capstone course; we expect it will sensitize future administrators to the larger world by deepening their understanding of how graduate students in other nations perceive them as change leaders.
Introductions – A bit about me

- Currently Professor of Educational Administration at SUNY Oswego – since 2011
- Served as Dean of Oswego’s School of Education for 13.5 years, leading three (NCATE) accreditation visits
- Principal Investigator for Project BLEN[D [Building Leadership Excellence for Needs-based Districts] - $1.8 million
- Chaired Oswego’s Technology Department 1993-97
- Professor Industrial Technology at San Jose State University from 1978-1993
- Ed.D. in Educational Administration from the University of the Pacific 1982
What are Signature Pedagogies?

- Professor Lee Shulman introduced this concept in 2005 with his discussion of the ways we teach in the professions.
- He highlights those practices that are most pervasive in the professions of medicine, engineering, law and the clergy.
- Over the past decade, educators in a wide range of disciplines have embarked on quests to find signature pedagogies in their fields.
Professor Lee S. Shulman

President Emeritus of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; served 11 years as its eighth president and stepped down in 2008. SUNY Oswego awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in 2004.
Signature Pedagogies - Dimensions

- **Surface Structure:** These are the concrete, operational acts of teaching & learning; showing, demonstrating, interacting, questioning, answering.

- **Deep Structure:** The set of assumptions about how to impart a certain body of knowledge & know-how.

- **Implicit Structure:** Rests on the moral dimension that comprises a set of beliefs about the attitudes, values and dispositions held by those in the profession.
Signature Pedagogies - Habits

**Mind:** pedagogical strategies that inform and ultimately push students to “think” like a ......

**Hand:** pedagogies that enable students to practice and ultimately “perform” like a .....  

**Heart:** instructional opportunities that prepare students to “behave” and “feel” like ...... with a strong moral compass.
Signature Pedagogies - Features

- Habitual
- Routine
- Visible
- Accountable
- Interdependent
- Collaborative
- Emotional
- Unpredictable
- Affect-laden
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**Summary of Shulman’s Ideas Regarding Signature Pedagogies**
**Signature Pedagogies for Educational Leadership**

- Authentic learning with practical applications
- Candidates are given multiple opportunities in our program to seek new and innovative ideas, using diverse perspectives to develop as leaders for social justice
- Some of our Signature Pedagogies include: (1) in-depth analysis of an issue through action research; (2) creation of a school improvement plan presented to a BOE; (3) clinical supervision of teaching in classrooms; and (4) case studies about ethical dilemmas
What is Missing?

⚠️ Our candidates report feeling a bit less than well-prepared to tackle issues related to collaborating with family & community members, especially those who are not from the same culture or ethnic background

⚠️ Limited experiential cross-cultural learning while enrolled in our CAS program
Pros and Cons for COIL

Benefits

- COIL partnership becomes a key member of the vertical integration between school districts and IHEs where learning is embedded in contemporary practice.
- A COIL module in a course will link NYS leadership candidates with graduate students in another country who will bring diverse geo-physical perspectives and insights to the shared assignment.
- Our students will receive a vastly different glimpse of how they are perceived as leaders.

Challenges

- Faculty members feel face-to-face teaching trumps online delivery of courses.
- Instructional technologies are often inconsistent, unreliable or uneven to support an efficient intercultural interchange between partners.
- There is anxiety about lacking skills needed to play the role of intercultural mediator when moments of tension surface.
- Students don’t want the extra work required for COIL!
Finding a Partner

- In July 2014 I began seeking a faculty member who might be interested in creating a partnership with SUNY Oswego via COIL
- IHEs in: Finland, Norway, Great Britain, Scotland, South Africa, Singapore, Australia, Japan, Germany and Belgium
- An agreement finally came together in early January 2015 with Dr. Katja Hericks at the Universität Potsdam in Germany
Our COIL Connection

Universität Potsdam

Dr. Katja K. Hericks
Assistant Professor, Sociology of Gender

SUNY Oswego

Dr. Linda Rae Markert
Professor, Educational Administration
Connecting Two Graduate Courses

- Organizational Change for School Building & District Leaders [Oswego, NY]
- Organizational Change – Institutional Change [Potsdam, Germany]
- Oswego’s students will become licensed educational leaders in NYS; Potsdam’s students are earning their graduate degree in Sociology
Collaborative Learning Topics

- How are acts of bullying/mobbing dealt with inside organizations? What changes are needed?

- How is the process of evaluation and performance measurement handled within tertiary sector organizations (service industry including education)? How are these changes received by employees?
Collaborative Learning Topics ...

How do policies regarding gender equality and parental leave influence change in organizations?

In how far does the claim for lifelong learning require change in educational organizations?
**COIL Outcomes**

- US students are paired with German students; the teams will spend about four weeks investigating one of these topics to determine or identify:
  1. How the issue pervades the organization
  2. Binational differences & scope of organizational change
  3. What is changing or how deliberate change can be triggered

- Teams will ultimately create BLOGs to discern their findings, perceptions & new perspectives
Is COIL a Signature Pedagogy?

These current efforts to transform a small portion of Oswego’s CAS program to include a globally networked academic experience for prospective school leaders are well-intentioned, but replete with uncertainty!
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Questions, Comments?

Thank you for attending!
lindarae.markert@oswego.edu

Copies of our cultural competency surveys are available.