
High-Impact Practices

How Some Faculty Members Are A new award has stepped Working To Give You Your Best Education

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Let's face it: when you look back at your college years, your most distinct memories may not be of yourself sitting in class. Unless, of course, you took part in a course that used a high impact practice (HIP), a set of classroom methods that have been proven to enhance learning.

Examples of HIPs in the Pace curriculum include capstone courses, collaborative assignments and projects, diversity/ global learning, first-year seminars, internships, learning communities, service learning, undergraduate research, and writing- enhanced courses.

At "Bringing Theory to Practice," a conference for faculty members held Oct.15, professors learned more about each of these HIPs.

Jillian Kinzie was the keynote speaker and serves as the Associate Director of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute for Effective Educational Practice.

Kinzie explained NSSE's research results, which demonstrate that in HIP courses, student learning and development increase. This can mean more persistence and better grades.

Historically underrepresented students, including first generation students, some raciaethnic groups, transfer students and some majors, benefit "substantially," Kinzie said.

Kinzie said students in these HIP experiences improve their ability to "attend to the underlying meaning of information..., integrate and synthesize different ideas and sources... discern patterns...apply knowledge in different situations, and view issues from multiple perspectives." For universities and colleges, these results can mean better student retention rates.

How does this work at Pace? Panels of Pace faculty members and students explained. Jean Coppola, from the Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems, spoke about teaching students to be more sensitive to the problems that very old people can have in

using computers. This lesson was taught when the students wore glasses that simulate poor vision and put popcorn kernels in their shoes to simulate arthritis.

The students then travel to senior centers and use their fresh empathy to introduce older people to computing.

In the Lienhard School of Nursing, Susan E. Gordon spoke about posing practical questions that students can answer by learning about research, like whether a patient who gets up and walks eight hours after surgery does better than one who doesn't walk for 12 hours.

Roberta Wiener, from the School of Education, shared her students' experience with child observation in the classroom during student teaching.

The Jack Norton Worldwide advertising agency has become the stage for capstone experiences of students in an advanced marketing class taught by Randi Priluck, of the Lubin School of Business. Students put together a marketing campaign for actual companies and present it in front of real marketing executives.

The students of Jaimelee Rizzo, from the Dyson College of Arts and Sciences, have gained vast experience from their undergraduate research and their work as her lab assistants, including jobs at Estée Lauder, medical schools and PHD programs.

After the faculty panel, six students who have participated in HIPs spoke about their firsthand experiences, including Madelyn Farris, Victoria Measles, Faiza Sheikh, Samuel Thomas, and Benjamin Williams.

Thomas and Williams said that for Coppola's civic-engagement class they refurbished and installed old computers from a Brooklyn community college in churches needing technology, partnering their CSIS major with business and management skills.

Students got "tarred and feathered" - though with sticky notes - during Farris and Measles' time in William Offutt's ReActing to the Past courses.

Enacting parts of the US Revolutionary era, they said, gave them an understanding of the historical period that they can apply to the present, since "history repeats itself."

Sheikh, a student of Rizzo's, said her lab experience was like going to school in America: everything was new, but she thought "Why not give it a try?" Now Sheikh mentors other undergraduate researchers. Her excitement was contagious and provoked laughter and applause from the audience of faculty members.

The ePortfolios now coming into use at Pace were described by an ePortfolio intern, who said the blog feature gave her "a new, freer voice" that made relating the coursework in her Capstone literature course more natural. She said she also used the blog feature to track her progress at her summer internship at Westchester Magazine.

Every Pace student has the chance to make his or her classroom experience more meaningful by seeking out courses like these. Whether it's a first year seminar like University 101, a culminating Capstone Course, or something in between, getting the most out of a HIP depends on what you

put in it, and HIPs encourage putting in a lot.

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