

Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies, Mid-term Evaluation

Gender, Race, and the Complexities of Science and Technology

Peter Taylor and Anne Fausto-Sterling

Observations & Responses from instructors:

- a. Overall response affirms the value of introducing the PBL approach to graduate students – see especially items that struck us in blue – but also room for more guidance
- b. Some responses pull in different directions (e.g., Assigned readings perfect vs. more material wanted) => draw students into the challenge of addressing diversity (e.g., work closer with students who want it to create customized bibliographies)
- c. Select a do-able set of improvements & clarifications to undertake (say, 5 – any more and the risk is that none will get attempted) – see items in red [with instructor suggestions in brackets]

1. What concrete incidents/comments/reactions in the course have caught your attention?

- The idea of collaborative learning – so new to me.
- Personal reactions to pieces of knowledge
- The KAQ process.
- When Anne brought people BACK to a question and had us think about it again, and she was making a larger point about power dynamics. It was good.
- Inverted pedagogy.
- The amount of attention the professors give to what transpires in the classroom and on the blog is good. The structure of the class requires repeated engagement. It looks labor intensive for you. Thank you.

2. a. What has excited you?

- Problem Based Learning – its potential for engagement of folks from collaborative disciplines to address an issue.
- Questioning in parallel, many questions at a time!!
- Being in a room with folks from such varied/interesting backgrounds.
- Being able to do my own work however I want.
- Very supportive atmosphere
- The other students' wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm.

b. What has frustrated you?

- The time of day – I'm exhausted by 8 PM! [brainstorm about attention-prolonging activities, e.g., water, jumping jacks,...]
- Not having more interaction with my classmates (small groups made it difficult to get to know all of them)
- Having the PBL+ KAQ+ GRST lenses on at the same time.
- Lack of NEW MATERIAL, I would like more readings and a closer focus on them.
- I feel there is a lot I didn't read and that distracts from the quality of my "cases"
- I do not always know what is expected and I don't mean in the grand scheme, I mean I am really struggling to know which assignments and the kind of work is required on a weekly basis. [draw attention to <http://sicw.wikispaces.com/GRST13#Schedule> & <http://sicw.wikispaces.com/-/GRST/g/Notes#Writing> & encourage bookmarking]

3. a. What trends do you see emerging in the classes?

- Just that the learning is facilitated by personal interaction.
- Independent inquiry (stimulated by listening to others)
- Collaborative work.
- People developing more concrete ideas i.e. workshops, paper ideas, projects, etc...
- Real interdisciplinarity.
- A really strong desire for students to support each other.

b. What are the implications of these for your learning and thinking?

- Dynamic, new and interdisciplinary approaches to science – race, gender, sexual biology, etc.
- HUGE! I am gaining more [self-confidence in my ideas](#) and informal modes of doing research.
- The KAQ process has already (sneakily) seeped into my personal research method.
- I've been learning presentation techniques.
- My own [book project changed considerably](#) by now.
- It is really splendid, I wouldn't mind more critical feedback, but this class is really good for me as is.

4. a. What might be your next steps as a learner-participant in this course?

- More research – always want to step up my game.
- Talking more to my classmates and putting my project to work.
- Read more!
- To think of my own project.
- To integrate my own current research.
- I don't understand this question, see 2B. I am so frantically trying to stay afloat I cannot look ahead.

b. What support would you like in taking these steps?

- The same as I've received – more resources, engagement.
- Feedback from everyone!
- More time and scaffolding.
- More material. More of a [CONCRETE focus on RACE, CLASS, NATIONALITY, through readings](#).
- More guidance in working with science journal
- A clearer syllabus – I am not finding this model very effective [\[see above & draw students into a +delta rather than consumer mode on online materials\]](#)

5. Other comments (appreciations and suggestions for development/improvement)?

- That wiki... love and hate it. Great resource, easy to use. But disorganized! [\[see above\]](#)
- I really [like the group reflections](#) we do at the end of some classes.
- Engage/create opportunities to bring in backgrounds/specialties of folks in class.
- --
- Sometimes I find the instructions and case description a little unclear. [\[draw students into a +delta mode on this\]](#)
- It is clear the professors care passionately about their students' learning. But I do sometimes feel their responses come from cursory shimming.

6. Do you feel the expectations of the instructors are appropriate?

- Most definitely.
- Yes.
- Don't know/not sure what those expectations are [\[see above & ask to be asked\]](#).
- Yes.
- Yes.

- When I understand them, yes.

7. **What is your opinion of the assigned readings? (Quality, level, amount)**

- Perfect – you get out of this what you put in.
- So far I find them very engaging and appropriate.
- There isn't much, but the ones so far have been challenging. Would've liked to read Peter's article on his methodology earlier in the course.
- There aren't enough; we should have more that deal with race, gender, nationality, class, in relation to STS
- There aren't many, but they are all helpful. [remind people of expectation of annotated bibliography entries]
- Yes, yes, yes. I said it at the beginning, but again – thank you!