

Introduction to PhD Program

Assignment #2

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Write a one paragraph summary statement about the article characterizing the main message of the article?

This article assumes that the ultimate goal of learning is knowing how to get to an answer rather than knowing the answer, and it be bitterly done in cooperation rather than isolation and discriminates cheating from cooperative work based on this goal. It introduces the idea of Mastery grading and fundamental changes to curriculum and instruction. Mastery grading is evaluating students on their mastery level on their ability to work with others. Norman proposes that mastery grading keeps students from cheating prevents them to cram everything we think the student will ever need to know into their heads in a relatively short period, and trains curiosity, self-reliance, cooperative skills, and knowledge of how to learn on their own.

What is the message of this article for your career as a PhD student?

As a PhD student, I have two different roles: the first one is me as a student and the second is me as a TA.

The message of this article for me as a student is to understand what the ultimate goal of learning is: to learn how to solve the problem and that is finding a solution by any mean that is available and that includes different resources, colleagues and classmates. So it motivates me to do cooperative work and value that and meanwhile know the boundaries between cheating and networking.

The message for me as a TA is understanding the same thing and applying that in the classroom as much as it is possible, because we often do not have the authority to change the whole grading system and the curriculum but one step forward toward encouraging students to cooperate and master in one or many areas of solving problems, is itself valuable.

Define the boundaries between “cheating” and “collaboration”?

Cheating that involves deceit is wrong and deceit is anyway of hiding something like the source that the work has come from. So if the student gives credit to the resource (another student, website, book,...) is no longer counts as cheating.

Find one article related to the theme of Norman's article

Aviles, Christopher B., Creatively Adapting Mastery Learning and Outcome-Based Education to the Social Work Classroom.

Abstract:

This workshop was presented on outcome-based education and described how the instructional method called mastery learning compliments it and can be adapted for social work education. Although outcome-based education involves creating clearly outlined expected student outcomes, by itself it is not an instructional method. Mastery learning is a behavioral instructional method that involves using time flexibly to increase student learning. Some of the essential elements of mastery learning include: (1) choosing instructional content; (2) writing instructional objectives; (3) performing vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment; (4) communicating learning objectives to students; and (5) criterion referenced instead of norm referenced grading. Mastery learning has been successfully used in higher education and social work education. The essential elements of mastery learning can be implemented in whole or in part, and in ways ranging from simple to complex. Several ways are discussed on how social work educators can implement mastery learning to better fit classroom use, including classroom structure, testing, and grading. A cautionary note on how to anticipate time involvement for faculty is discussed. Overall, social work educators may find that mastery learning provides them with increased awareness and control over the essential content taught in their classrooms. (Contains 3 figures and 55 references.) (JDM)

Describe the process that you chose to find such an article

First, I googled for resources on education literature and I found "Education Resources Information Center" at <http://eric.ed.gov/> and then I searched for keywords that were found in Norman's article such as "Cooperative Skills" and "Mastery Grading" and I looked in the results and I found this article the most relevant.