Inclusive Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for Online Microcampus Teaching

Theoretical Application Assignment - Final
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Problem Statement:

Instructors involved with the University of Arizona's (henceforth UArizona) microcampus program—a model that offers flipped, co-taught programs at international institutions—struggle to incorporate the local context, culture, and lives of students who hail from a non-Western society. At best, this can alienate students from the material (such as in an Environmental Ethics course in Peru that does not consider highly relevant situates in the Amazon) and, at worst, does not make sense (such as discussing crosswalks in a Sustainable Built Environment course in an Asian country without crosswalks). Therefore, instructors need to develop a stronger understanding of inclusive culturally response pedagogy (henceforth ICRP), improve their confidence in making these course adjustments for audiences outside their local context, and prepare for course design conversations with their Global Lecturer counterparts. The program consists of existing courses that are redesigned for the international partnership. Sometimes the UArizona instructors are the originators of the course, and sometimes they have inherited them. They work to co-teach the courses in a flipped co-taught model where the Global Lecturers teach on the ground while the UArizona faculty manages the online element. However, this varies based on instructor and departmental conversations. Previous efforts to teach instructors how to do ICRP through a short lecture have not led to anything beyond rote comprehension of what they "should" do.

Target Learners:

The target learners are University of Arizona faculty members teaching online courses to undergraduate and graduate college students at international partnerships through UArizona's Microcampus program. These instructors are generally established within the University, although on rare occasions an instructor who has been with the University for less than a year is assigned. They all have teaching experience, although they do not all have online teaching experience. Learners participating in this workshop will have a range of experiences in Microcampus courses, as this would be offered to both new and returning instructors. These instructors must be assigned to a course to attend this workshop so they can use an existing design as a model. The instructors hail from various disciplines, from engineering to business to philosophy.

Due to the challenges involved with drastically different time zones, this training excludes Global Lecturers. For example, 6 a.m. in Tucson is 8 p.m. in Jakarta, which precludes meetings during the work day. It is more important that faculty connections occur during course development and throughout the semester. Preparing UArizona Faculty to work with their counterpart is more important than looping in Global Lecturers. Although their insight would be ideal, it is difficult to include it in the specific lesson plan below.

List of Instructional Objectives:

By the end of this training, learners will:
1. Describe the key elements of inclusive culturally responsive pedagogy (ICRP).
2. Critique existing modules of online courses to identify potentially problematic/un-inclusive elements.
3. Demonstrate open-minded collaboration with peers.
4. Propose a new design for a module in their online course.

Selected learning theories and/or instructional strategies:

The instructional strategies and techniques included in this workshop are social constructivism, cooperative learning, the ICAP framework, the six C's of motivation, and computer mediated instruction.

Details of Lesson Plan/Training Module:

This is a one-day, three-hour training module that will occur synchronously over Zoom. It requires learners to have access to an existing online module of their course.

Pre-Training: During registration, learners will fill out a form explaining:
1. Their current working definition of inclusive and culturally responsive pedagogy,
   a. This first question will help establish a baseline of knowledge for participants in this project.
2. Their experience with cross-institutional, cross-boundary, and diverse student education
3. A brief description of the course module they will be adapting, and
4. The Microcampus at which the course will be offered.

Before the group meets, the instructor will pair learners (once again, only UArizona Faculty) based on their responses to match people with similar levels of understanding of ICRP and the same Microcampus.

A note on the instructor: Due to the selected learning strategies, the instructor(s) need to be trained in cooperative learning and group facilitation, particularly in online environments. The training module, except for the beginning introduction, will occur in learner-led breakout groups. In an ideal setting, there would be an instructor ratio of 1:4 (for every instructor, there are four students) to ensure a level of instructor presence in all group work. The instructor(s) are also encouraged to develop classroom ground rules to distribute in advance of the training to minimize any risk of negativity. ICRP work requires some level of internal reflection that can lead to more sensitivity on the behalf of the learners.

Training Flow:

1. **Intro to ICRP (20 minutes).** The instructor will guide the students through a brief overview of the main principles of ICRP and its importance through an interactive lecture. This will proceed as a lecture-style presentation with several opportunities for learners to respond to multiple choice, ranked, and selection questions through quiz/polling software, like Poll Everywhere. Questions are designed to promote the key elements of ICRP and also help learners to find a way to dive into a personal handling of material.

2. **Content exploration in breakout room (40 minutes).** Learners will be put into breakout rooms to explore a variety of existing modules (through an interactive software like [Genially](#)) through the lens of ICRP and record their insights in a working Google Document.

   Questions to consider during this reflective phase include but are not limited to:
   a. How can you adapt the content to be inclusive of local circumstances?
      i. While learners might not be familiar with the specific circumstances of the Microcampus partners, they can use their own experience with different cultures to think of elements that might be valuable to consider. For example, considerations can include family dynamics, education access, technology experience, and more.
   b. What differences in cultural context do you need to consider to ensure materials and activities are not developed from a US-centric perspective?
   c. What opportunities are there to improve inclusion and cultural specificity in external media (such as images, videos, etc.)?
   d. Is the language clear, concise, and friendly to ELL students?
   e. What resources are students expected to acquire or use? Are there additional considerations (such as financial cost or internet bandwidth) that can be better incorporated?

3. **Review institutional profiles (20 minutes).** Learners will review brief institutional profiles—resources that discuss partner expectations, cultural considerations, the learning environment of students, demographics, etc.—to gain a better understanding of the specific cultural context from which their students come in a group. Since learners are paired with someone who shares their Microcampus, these groups will consist of two pairs that share the same Microcampus. If there are no groups that share a campus, the instructor will pair them geographically. For example, if instructors have separate Microcampuses that are both in China, Southeast Asia, or South America. Groups should not exceed four people or two pairs.

4. **Module exploration in breakout room (40 minutes).** With this specific context in mind, learners will return to their pair-share rooms to review their partner's module. Together, they will identify opportunities and make suggestions for specific changes that will lead to a more inclusive culturally responsive course design based on their new knowledge. The instructor will move around the groups to ensure the pair-share activity is functioning properly as well as provide any required support to learners (this could be suggestions, providing discussion prompts, or answering questions).

5. **Individual Redesign (20 minutes).** Learners will take time to write down their plan on how to update their module in a "design sprint". They are encouraged to briefly explain why they made those decisions. They could (and should) be influenced by their partner, the ICRP lecture, the institutional profiles, and their own newly developed knowledge. This will be written down on the Google Document used before. This document will be submitted to the instructor at the end of the course to be graded and reviewed.

6. **Group discussion (40 minutes).** The last section of the training will be an open floor discussion on challenges, lessons learned, and future strategies to incorporate in designing ICRP online Microcampus courses. The instructor should only jump in if necessary to help direct students toward additional reflection questions. This should be a space for the learners to bring forward their experiences in this training and ideas on how to review courses with an ICRP perspective. Due to the personal nature of this work, it is important to allow faculty members to drive the conversation. This will help them in their future interactions with Global Lecturers.

Assessments:

The registration form questions will serve as the pre-test. By providing a space for learners to define inclusive and culturally responsive pedagogy and connect that to their experience in non-homogenous education, the instructor will be able to establish learners' baseline experience with ICRP. Using this baseline to determine partnerships will help students benefit the most from their partners as they will learn together without one student dominating the conversation.

As this experience is a hands-on training, the activities in the middle provide opportunities for learners to practice the key skills and components of ICRP. The lecture will provide needed information for learners' reference; they will immediately apply these main components in their sample content analysis. By having them work in a pair-share environment, they will practice examining existing content to identify areas of improvement and process input from their colleagues, ensuring a more holistic co-learning experience. These correlate directly to learning objectives one through three; mastery of these elements is required to effectively move forward with their redesign.

These activities will allow learners to develop their working expertise with ICRP and its concepts from instructional and student-facing perspectives. It is designed to assist students in moving up the ladder of ICRP competency with appropriate scaffolding and instructor support.

The concrete deliverable for this training module is the submission of learner notes. Since culture is so specific, the institutional profile review provides some additional necessary information to ensure the learners can apply the theory they have practiced to a real situation comparable to those they will encounter in their Microcampus teaching journey. Putting them in larger groups will provide additional opportunities for collaboration and perspectives as they discuss the institutional profiles and pull out the most important components.

Students will also be assessed by their verbal peer feedback and participation in the final group discussion. Not only do they need to demonstrate an understanding of the key elements of ICRP, but they need to demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with peers who have a different perspective than they do respectfully and clearly. Their commentary will be compared to their registration response to determine how the module changed their understanding of the concepts taught.

While this course is not graded, learners will receive verbal feedback on their presentation from their peers with specific attention to their consideration of culture. The instructor will provide feedback on the notes, particularly on their module redesign. They will also notate any other elements that the instructor finds appropriate and helpful to call out for the learners. They will receive a micro-credential certificate following completion that they can share elsewhere. We are unable to enforce training for these professors as they all come from different departments with different values, expectations, and support for professional development. Hopefully, this credential will further support motivation as they will be able to add it to their CV.

Elaboration of selected learning theories and instructional strategies:

The social learning environments and knowledge co-creation inherent in **social constructivism's** valuation of the lived experience, expertise, and culture of all participants is a strong stratagem, particularly in the present day. Knowledge is co-created through social activities between individuals and is not passively inherited. Constructivist theory underpins **cooperative learning**, a strategy that encourages knowledge development, partnerships, and problem-solving within small groups of actively engaged students who work together but are assessed separately as opposed to a traditional lecture-style classroom. Students are dependent on each other to further develop their knowledge and therefore demonstrate more critical and communicative skills. The **ICAP framework** encourages cooperative learning by

emphasizing interactive learning activities— which can be defined as a generative collaboration—over constructive, active, and passive activities. This framework posits that higher levels of engagement in the classroom lead to higher levels of educational attainment. The **six C's of motivation**—choice, challenge, control, collaboration, constructing meaning, and consequences—are strategies that can encourage active and authentic learner participation and engagement by improving learner motivation. **Computer-mediated instruction** leverages technology to compress time, space, access, and power by creating learning opportunities outside the traditional face-to-face classroom.

Explanation of the relationship between the design and the chosen learning theories and instructional strategies:

The content and skills students will need to demonstrate stem from constructivist epistemology, and so do the learning strategies in this module design. Social constructivism—the primary theory underpinning this lesson plan—requires all learners to leverage their experiences, culture, and context to jointly construct knowledge that can then influence reality, in this case, the reality of course design. Using elements of both the active, hands-on cognitive tools approach in the deliverables and the idea-based approach theoretical approach through peer collaboration, learners in a social environment will be able to learn from, with, and alongside their peers. ICRP does not lend itself to traditional ideas of empiricism because the content itself is based on social exploration.

Social constructivism closely relates to cooperative learning: both uplift the learner's experiences and use the social exploration of that experience as the base of knowledge development. As the learners are faculty members, they have existing personal insights they can use to inform their conversations. By working with peers with different personal insights, they will transform, develop, and improve their knowledge as they dialogically engage with other individuals who hold their own insights. As noted in social constructivism theory, learning is a social process so these social interactions are highly valuable. In a perfect world, it would be incredibly beneficial to include Global Lecturers for these reasons; as previously mentioned, this is very tricky.

The pair-share peer activities ensure that learners are accountable to each other, emphasize the need for successful collaboration, and improve their ability to critically analyze and communicate complex concepts, opening space for meaningful student interaction. Pair-share groups also allow more direct participation, requiring full engagement throughout the course. To ensure maximum benefit from these partnerships, the ICAP framework emphasizes interactivity between pairs in synchronous dialogical environments to ensure equal collaboration and "mutual exchanges of ideas between two individuals resulting in new ideas that neither individual knew initially nor could generate alone (Chi & Wylie, 2014, p. 223)." This

is also why students need to be paired with someone from a similar educational background to promote knowledge co-development rather than a devolution into a lecturer-listener dichotomy. The sample content reflection was placed as an early activity to allow students to engage in constructivist activities to ensure they can be strong partners in the interactive assessments.

A computer-mediated strategy was selected over a face-to-face course to utilize the flexibility of online learning materials and the ability to quickly adjust groups. Furthermore, the compression of power hierarchies will promote more equal dialogue as learners are put into an environment that is more peer-oriented than traditional classrooms. Furthermore, this replicates the likely environment that learners will experience when they work with their Global Lecturer counterparts post-training.

The flow of the course considers the Six C's of Motivation, barring choice (due to the assignment of campus and courses) and control (due to the compressed length of time). Collaboration has been discussed at length. Scaffolding and opportunities for reflection will support an appropriate challenge level as learners will be supported as they grapple with new complex theory and its subsequent application. The hands-on approach and importance of the knowledge throughout learners' Microcampus careers (and, frankly, all elements of course design) support the construction of meaning as learners gain skills critical to their future work in this training. Finally, the decision to have students practice their redesign and then discuss their experience in synchronous groups correlates to consequences, as learners will present some expertise in a public forum. The oral component ensures learners can engage in a final interactive activity with the group that will keep them thinking long after the close of the training.

In sum, the intentional choice of learning strategies serves to develop student knowledge by placing it in juxtaposition with their peers to gain a more holistic understanding of complex topics and improve their skills in intentional ICRP course design.

Justification/Evaluation of how the chosen learning theories and instructional strategies addresses the problem Statement:

Overall, these strategies work well together, particularly when developing a lesson that requires more intensive collaboration. The biggest challenge for these faculty members is the understanding of how to remove themselves from their local context and preferences and design a course that will serve students from diverse and likely unfamiliar backgrounds. By providing space for learners to unpack some of this complexity and bias alongside their peers, they will recognize the value of multiple perspectives and learn how to communicate with another person on these decisions. The Microcampus model pairs UArizona faculty members with Global

Lectures, so the collaboration and communication practice will streamline their work and help them understand their colleagues' perspectives. However, offering this workshop to UArizona faculty and putting them in such small groups runs the risk of an "echo chamber" where similar backgrounds do not meaningfully engage with the work. It is also risky to allow any sort of cooperative learning without instructor oversight, but the use of groups precludes full instructor attention. However, the combination of constructive and interactive learning assessments will keep learners on track.

As with everything requiring faculty buy-in, time is the most valuable resource. Therefore, the decision to emphasize computer-mediated instruction will allow ease of access as learners will save some time and promote fluidity in the training module while allowing instantaneous feedback that allows learners to continuously move through their iterative learning. However, a potential issue may arise in the final group discussion as the instructor may face difficulty coercing valuable remarks from all learners. In addition, it can be difficult to maintain attention and engagement synchronously over the computer over a long period. Hence, the inclusion of motivational strategies through the Six C's. By attempting to include both intrinsic (in challenge and constructing meaning) and external (in collaboration and consequences) motivations, learners will progress through the course authentically without the paralysis that can arise in digital environments.

This is not the only way the learning problem could be addressed. Another possibility is through case-based learning. Due to CBL's emphasis on narrative and discussion to analyze, reflect on, and propose solutions to examples, another strategy could focus more directly on the "redesign" component and result in a more developed module update. Ideally, this would be used in lengthier training. While the priority in the existing lesson plan is on co-learning, additional space for instructor feedback could be used more in some areas, such as by removing some pair-share time. The instructor would then fill the role of Vygotsky's More Knowledgeable Other and may be able to move learners further along in their Zone of Proximal Development than what can occur when both students are new. The idea of an MKO could also be leveraged in a cognitive apprenticeship training that uses ICRP experts or Global Lecturers to model best practices and coach new learners through a redesign. Problem-based learning would also be a possibility, particularly when requiring deep engagement with complex topics. There are similar issues regarding time and demonstrable skills, however.

References

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