

Impact Studies II

March 15, 2004

In my earlier essay titled *Impact Studies* I spoke of impact as the purpose of it all: the change in organizational systems, personal skill competency, group intimacy and collaboration that makes the whole learning and transfer effort worthwhile. Impact must be celebrated and documented. Learning is what occurs in the session; transfer is the use of new skills, knowledge and behaviors in life. How can we measure impact? That is the question of the day, to me.

Imagine that you are starting a new graduate program in Information Systems. In addition to the Seven Design Steps which identify the achievement-based objectives and the content and the learning tasks, your dialogue education professor offers you a questionnaire measuring the impact of this course on your professional and personal life. I propose that your learning and transfer will be deeply influenced by that instrument, and that you will surpass any impact imagined by your professor and by the university offering the course.

In beginning the design of a new book titled *Impact Studies*, which will take ten of the cases in *Dialogue Education at Work: Case Studies* (2004) and measure impact, I suggested these questions to Dr. Jane Connor, whose university course is Multicultural Psychology:

All items are to be corroborated by either qualitative (anecdotal) evidence or quantitative (data) evidence.

Individual:

Students:

- career choices influenced by course?
- social choices influenced by course?
- curriculum choices influenced by course?
- reading choices influenced by course?
- political choices influenced by course?
- media choices (tv, newspapers, journals) influenced by course?
- personal language sets affected: dialogue, learning tasks, needs assessment, learning, learner-centered
- how many took the course at my suggestion? names, numbers...
- Inclusion operative in business? in family affairs?

Professor:

- changes in other courses taught?
- expanded membership in professional societies (or fewer memberships!)
- invitations to teach other teachers how to design for dialogue
- inclusion operative in professional arena, family affairs?

Organizational:

Department:

- inclusion operative?
- other professors inviting input on their courses?
- opposition?
- language sets used: dialogue, learning tasks, needs assessment, learning, learner-centered
- committee meetings, departmental meetings using dialogue designs?

University:

- media reports?
- increased registration in courses ?
- registration in department?
- other courses set up as dialogue education?
- language sets used: dialogue, learning tasks, needs assessment, learning, learner-centered
- committee meetings, departmental meetings using dialogue designs?
- decrease in harassment cases reported?
- decrease in rapes reported?

Who needs what as defined by whom? It would be interesting to offer a customized *Impact* questionnaire to department administrators, university administrators—deans, president, chancellor!—as well as department secretaries and parents of students...

Please think about this and share your ideas on impact indicators with me at janevella@globalearning.com. Thanks!!!