Ensure Students Are Learning:
Faculty Descriptions of Innovative Teaching Practices

Different Approaches to Teaching Mythology

Innovative Teaching Practice Description:

At the beginning of the semester, students choose a myth that will serve as the basis for a semester-long digital scrapbook project. Students develop the scrapbook in PowerPoint. The slide presentation is composed of a summary, visual information, and interpretations and is posted on the course website for peer review. The presentation must have 16–18 slides including the title slide and references slide. The project requirements for the slides are 18–36 point font, the notes sections must include additional information, inclusion of images or clipart with an average of one for every two slides, and at least three reputable source references.

After completing the scrapbook, students write a brief five-paragraph essay on their interpretation of the myth. Each body paragraph should include one interpretation of the myth. The essay requirements are two-to-three pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, and MLA documentation. Once complete, students upload the essay to the class website.

A second assignment is a Subaltern Mythologies project. Students are first presented an overview of relevant general terms. Following this, they are taken on a gallery walk that includes several artifacts from inside the tradition of initiation narratives and others that represent cultural mimesis (e.g., the trailer from *The Believers*).

The goal of this activity is to have students encounter, react to, and project onto several artifacts from the subaltern religious and mythological tradition, Santería. Students will write their observations and questions on poster paper that is provided next to each exhibit.

How to Ensure Participation in This Innovative Teaching Practice:

For this course, the instructor grades based on participation, which is 10% of the grade; students have to attend five of the seven class meetings to fulfill the participation requirement for the first half of the semester. The second half of the semester consists of workshop days; students are counted present if they are current on all their online work.