

Ensure Students Are Learning: Faculty Descriptions of Innovative Teaching Practices

Peer Mentoring for Skill Set Improvement

Innovative Teaching Practice Description:

This is a hands-on course. About one-third of the way into the course, the instructor gives pairs of students a drawing assignment so that they can work together and mentor each other. So that mentoring can happen, each student is paired with another student who has an opposite skill set. For example, Student A has a good eye for accuracy but lacks creative mark making touch. Student B is not accurate in observation but has a good sense of creativity and touch. The students set up next to each other in class, and throughout the drawing process, they must critique and help each other. This kind of activity builds and fosters a collaborative environment.

In art classes, often there is fear of the page. The instructor should encourage students to just try something. The instructor should also coach how to critique.

Grading points for the assignment include the following: study skills, timeliness, ability to critique, ability to experience, ability to overcome frustration, and how students discuss things.

How to Prepare for This Innovative Teaching Practice:

The instructor should spend the first part of the semester assessing skills, technique, and personality before instituting this activity. To ensure inescapable engagement with these practices, the professor should walk around the room and discuss with students the specific elements of the activity on an individual and paired basis.