

SCHOLARSHIP OF EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

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The Paradox

Dr. Brown

- ▶ "I worked all summer designing an innovative & cutting edge class! We get to work in teams throughout the semester!!!"

Students

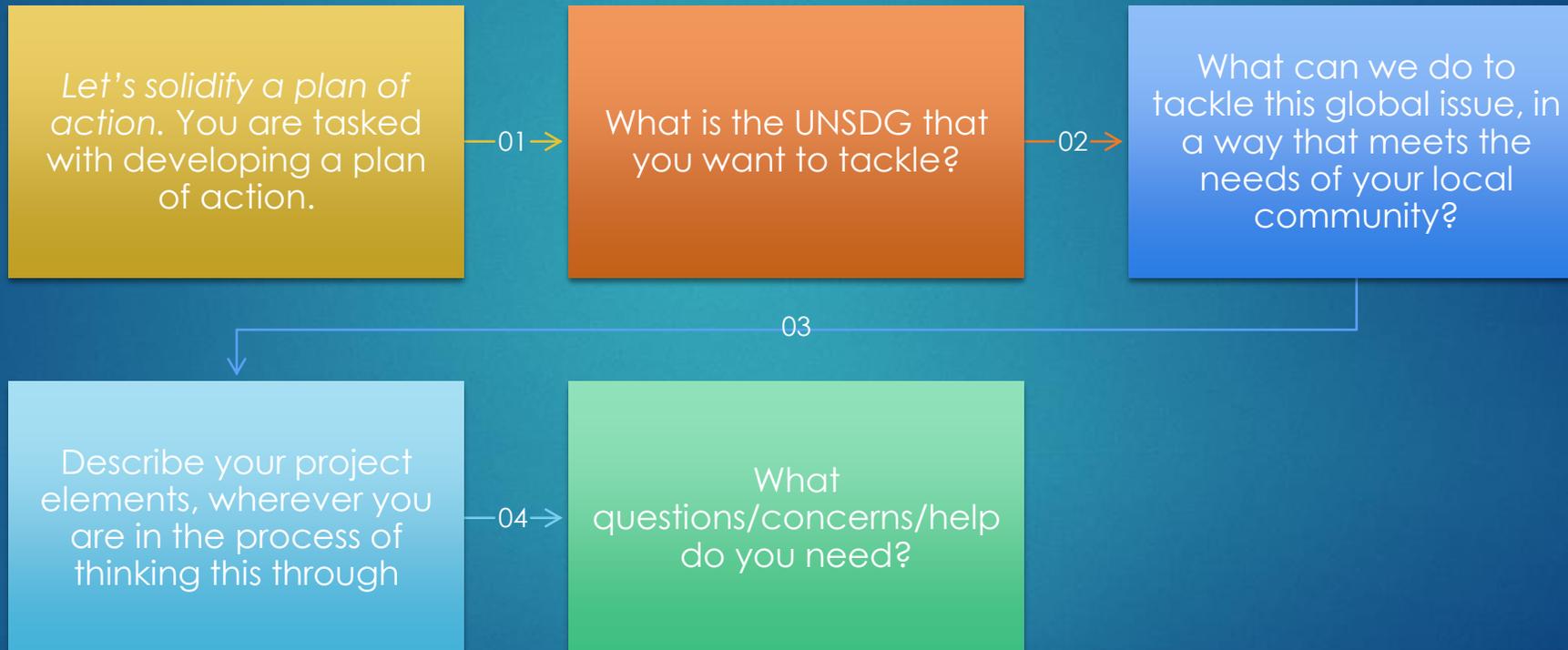
- ▶ "I hate working in groups! Can I do my entire project my myself?"

Goals

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- ▶ **Increase student engagement & class participation**
- ▶ **Increase student connection to MC**
- ▶ **Install in a multi-phased semester-long “group” project**
 - ▶ **Create an inclusive & support system of accountability for students to learn**
 - ▶ **Increase ability to raise their collective consciousness by remaining in dialogue & inquiry**
 - ▶ **Reduce student “drop” rate (students who fade out over the course of the semester)**
 - ▶ **Create more intimacy in the learning experience**
 - ▶ **Reduce sense of isolation that students felt from the quarantine**
 - ▶ **Monitor student health by creating an accountability system**
 - ▶ **Develop to better manage the workload (student & teacher)**
 - ▶ **Want to have students engage so that they can learn from each other to deconstruct global issues**
 - ▶ **Help students learn to embrace the extraordinary diversity at MC**

Milestone 3: Due Week 7



Why am I doing this?

- ▶ I utilize intricate designed and often multistage group projects to reinforce concepts in / and out of class.
- ▶ I was concerned that I could not discern:
 - ▶ Absent (single/ isolated episode)
 - ▶ Struggling to negotiate external stressors but committed to class
 - ▶ Health issues (mental & physical)
 - ▶ COVID
 - ▶ Civic unrest (safety concerns for students)
- ▶ Data suggested that students who do not have a sense of connection to MC are less likely to complete studies
- ▶ Needed to create more contact time & opportunities to engage students due to online teaching structures

Scholarship: What are you reading?

- ▶ “African American students receive significantly lower GPAs than Light students. Maybe because racist Americans have higher expectations for Light students, people tend to remember educated Black men as Light-skinned even when their dark skin is Dark. Is that why employers prefer Light Black men over Dark Black men regardless of qualifications?” (Kendi)
- ▶ “More than anything else, the most successful communicators treated anything they said to their students- whether in fifty- minute lectures or two- minute explanations- as a conversation rather than a performance. They interacted with students and encouraged and allowed them to interact with one another and with the material. “(Bain)

Scholarship: What are you reading?

“She monitors... & identifies which group(s) she wants to participate in the post-breakout room discussion, based on what they are writing on the slide & on whether the group contains any students who haven't participated much in the course. When students come back from the breakout rooms to the main room, she meticulously proceeds to call on the groups that she selected during her examination... & nudges low participation students to contribute to the conversation. In this way, she is able to conduct a discussion that is both effective & inclusive.” (Levy)

Game Plan

Examined pros & cons past experiences working in groups (+) & (-). Addressed anxieties, expectations, collegiality & consequences for lack of stewardship

Students self-selected groups based on their interests during the 2nd week of class

Created space for group work in class using breakout rooms & course schedule identified predetermined group work time that instead of didactic teaching

Created accountability system for participation & attendance

Use multiple assessment tools to monitor contributions: blackboard posts; individual submission of group tasks; grading based on team feedback of contribution

Milestone 1: Discussion Questions

What is your UN SDG topic area? (Use the link provided to help determine your choice).

Describe the issue you selected.

Why is ending this social issue important?

What do you already know?

Why are you choosing this area?

Have you already done your own research on this before or had previous hands on in this area? If so, explain.

Instructions



Describe/identify how you expanded your understanding of issues from a diverse perspective as you were in a learning project about global issues. (provide examples of topics/issues and explore how/what you learned thoroughly)



Reflect on how our cultural and geographical identities influence our lives and decisions. (examples to demonstrate your thoughts are important to help demonstrate your point/ideas)



Describe/demonstrate how you understand your own impact/responsibility to community after participating in this civic engagement project, learning from others, and exploring social issues and problem solving them.

Encouragers



"If you don't work...You don't eat."



There is no way that I am going to pass you for not producing. That would be exploiting your classmates. What would the UN say about that?



You have two options. 1) You can continue to try to engage her, or 2) you can kick her out of the group and you two take on the additional work & move forward?



I am glad you are back in the groove. You might want to reach out to your classmates & get back in good, so that you can get back on this train and keep rolling!

How did I know the strategies were working?



All projects completed & were high quality



Classmates provided feedback as to when their teammates were absent



Attendance remained high due to scheduled group time



Less individual meetings & emails



Tasks were submitted on time & extensions were asked for prior to due dates

#Torture: Equity & Accountability

Kim: I hope you continue to have a good weekend. It's hard for me morally to send you this, however, it has come to this point. For our project, I feel a lack of support and effort from my team. I have set up meetings, reached out repeatedly, and did 95% of the PowerPoint that we have yet to complete as a group. If I need to I will start over by myself. I am going to attach the PowerPoint I have conducted so far. Lauren did the first slide and I did the rest.

Dr. Brown: Hello Kim: Thanks for your submission. I was looking for this through the blackboard email. Apologies. Regarding your classmates. I gave you full credit, Lauren (3); Jose (0); Robert (0) to reflect their efforts. Please advise if you want to complete the rest of the project solo or if your group has begun to reorganize itself and is back on track. Please notify me via email and you can continue with the work that you have submitted thus far. Your other teammates would have to start from where they left off.

Centering marginalized voices: Shame to Pride

- ▶ “The study of mind is beneficial in understanding why things happen the way they do, why people do the things they do. Understanding the mental processes of the human mind allows one to broaden their perspective on world. Mental health is important no matter what part of the world you are in. My group decided to study how lack of education relates to the problem of poverty, which is an extremely broad topic. So, we decided to focus on country of Somalia where there is the greatest out of school population in the world amongst children. Researching this topic allowed me to see the interconnection of being able to receive an education and poverty rates. (Tanji - Somali Female Student)
- ▶ Through dialogue and inquiry the group chose to focus their intervention on their classmates country of origin. Student was proud to examine her culture to develop an intervention as compared to feeling demoralized because of the stereotypes which she had experienced in other classes

Leadership: By any means necessary

In order to solve this problem requires a cooperation between government and the society as people say “We are all in this together.” Working together is the key word.

One sample of working together is Zero Hunger class project. When a student is assigned to work in a group, the student may feel uncomfortable and hesitant. That is because they are forced to talk to someone in new environment, and they probably don't know each other well enough. In addition, they might not familiar with the UNSDG topic that they select, and they didn't conduct research of this topic.

As a result, **interaction during group discussion mostly unproductive**. I realized if I want to finish the project, I should step in and get us moving. Therefore, I initiate to reach out and motivate others to interact. **I pushed myself to provide some directions, including presentation format, content, images, and dividing task among group members.**

It was challenging at the beginning because of group response are low. However, I keep pushing myself as I believe by reaching out it will eventually inspire others to engage and contribute their ideas. **Patience** and **determination** are two major characteristics of group working. (Leslie)

Modeling citizenship in uncivil times

I found showing disagreement appropriately is challenging. Especially, when your teammates fail to provide supportive base of their opinion. Often, I was debating with myself whether it is 'safer' just accept their ideas in order to avoid conflicts or be open about it. If I include their ideas it may cause unrealistic action plan for class project.

I can say this because I may have some relevant experience of event planning. It is important to maintain group dynamic without jeopardizing class project. Therefore, I decided to confront this issue by showing related articles and explaining project framework patiently. Finally, other students start engaging and excited to work it out. (Tina)

Discussion Boards: Intergroup Feedback

Hi Ndode,

I really liked your group's consistent use of statistics to back up your points, especially the overall psychological effects of police brutality for both the victim and the perpetrator. I also thought your page about the history of police brutality helped to provide a good background on how long police brutality has existed in America. While I was watching, I was honestly surprised to hear that earliest instance of police brutality occurred the same year the police was instituted. It's really shocking and disappointing at the same time how much of a problem police brutality was back then, and still is today.

However, the in-depth racial sensitivity training your group talked about near the end of the presentation definitely sounds like a good idea to implement in the near future. I think that, plus making sure body cameras are used whenever police are on duty, will be very helpful in monitoring behavior, or even determining beforehand if somebody is psychologically fit enough to serve on the force. Nice work! (Mark)

Game Recognizes Game: Increased Student Accountability

Hey Amavi, I very much enjoyed your group's presentation. The format of doing the presentation as a podcast was very unique and creative. I understand Yully was the one who was leading the podcast but the individual and clear information each of you shared really gave a greater impact to the presentation as a whole. I was especially really surprised to hear that Somalia has the most out-of-school population in the world if I'm correct. (Hector)

Upon further reflection...

- ▶ Incorporate more team building exercises throughout semester
- ▶ Provided an intergroup rating scale / rubric
- ▶ Increased # of mandatory group meetings with professor
- ▶ Given opportunity for teams to present preliminary work more often in order to increase competition & sense of urgency from slow moving teams
- ▶ Continue to use project as designed
- ▶ MC students will step their “games” up when challenged to reach high standards