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Discussing Pedagogy in the **CLASSROOM**

How New Teachers Can Push
Students to Think Harder



On FERPA and Observation

- No identifying information will be provided regarding individual students.
 - This presentation only covers personal observations regarding past teaching experiences. This work is neither a part of nor drawn from past or ongoing research.
 - There are additional factors and interpretations which have been omitted for the sake of brevity.
- 





Caution: Hyperbole Ahead

- I'm going to emphasize certain factors that went wrong in order to better discuss how to address them.
- About half my students produced very good work for this project, and nearly everyone submitted acceptable work.
- Several students later revised their projects to raise their grades.



Pedagogy: The Phantom Theory

- Pedagogy represents our personal articulations of the relationship between teaching style and student performance.
 - Pedagogy is often viewed as theoretical, but it leads to concrete praxis. (Pop quiz, anyone?)
 - We earn our jobs based on our ability to articulate the connections between theory and praxis, but how many of our students have even heard the term "pedagogy"?
- 



Result? Students Feel a “Sensation of the Arbitrary”

- Students demand that their assignments will lead to definite identifiable benefits either to their grades or their futures.
- “If your assignment won’t help me get a job, then it better help me get an A...”




New Students...New Teachers

- In courses like English 101, freshman undergraduates are often taught by grad students and adjuncts.
- Many first-year courses are taught by younger professors, or in a lecture hall that splits into smaller TA sections.



A Tale of Two Projects

- This emphasis on explicitly discussing pedagogy with my students was the result of a classroom project in the Spring of 2012 which led to serious and very vocal student resistance.
 - Actively discussing pedagogy in the classroom – and inviting student feedback regarding the nature of the assignments – led to greater student buy-in during Fall 2012.
- 





Online CHAT Maps: The Project that “Failed”

- Mapping out Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) for popular genres (e.g. *Harry Potter*)
- Students would study the writing processes surrounding popular genres, use online tools to share their findings, and then provide feedback to each other regarding the presentation.




Why This Should Have Excited Students

- Popular Genres – Academic Freedom
 - Online Presentations – New Skills
 - Online and In-Class Critique – Extensive Feedback
- 




The Teaching Preparation: Blog Posts...a One-Way Street

- CHAT Maps
 - A Clear Grading Rubric with Checklist
 - Unit Rationale and Description (1,600 words)
 - Technology (2 Posts, 2 Outside Links)
 - Examples (2 Online PowerPoints)
 - The Workshop Process (3 Posts)
- 

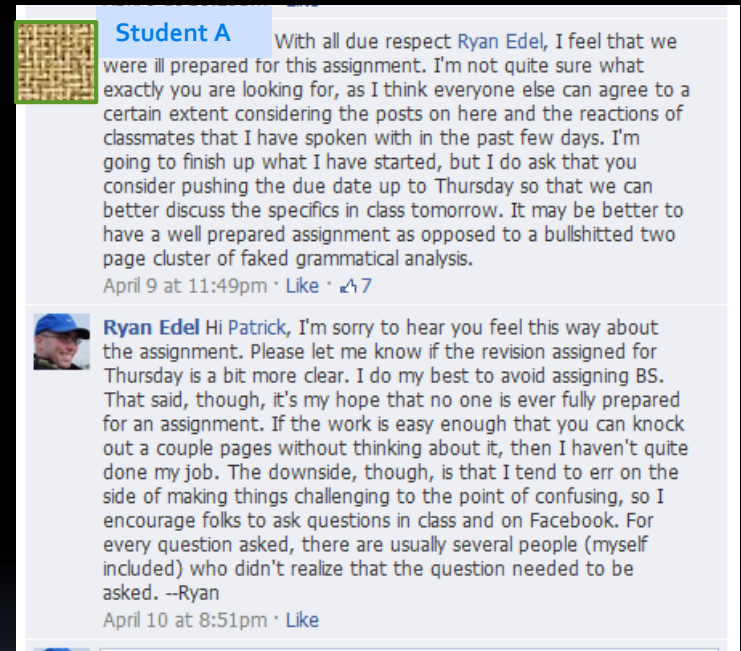


Disconnected Expectations

- Most vocal feedback: “When are we gonna do some writing?”
 - Most students were very excited about their projects...
 - ...but some were less excited about the grades they received.
- 

Student Anger on Facebook

- Student is unhappy: “It may be better to have a well prepared assignment as opposed to a bullsh**ed two page cluster of faked grammatical analysis.”



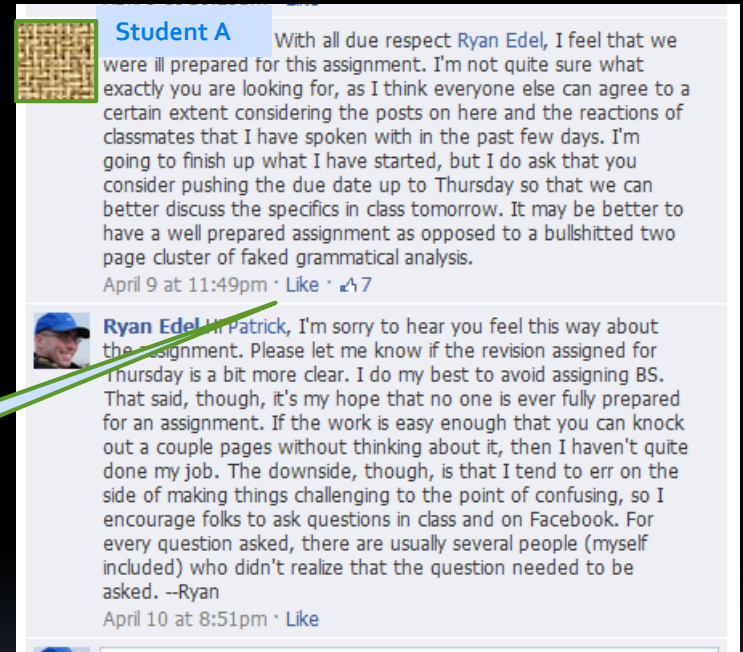
Student A With all due respect Ryan Edel, I feel that we were ill prepared for this assignment. I'm not quite sure what exactly you are looking for, as I think everyone else can agree to a certain extent considering the posts on here and the reactions of classmates that I have spoken with in the past few days. I'm going to finish up what I have started, but I do ask that you consider pushing the due date up to Thursday so that we can better discuss the specifics in class tomorrow. It may be better to have a well prepared assignment as opposed to a bullshitted two page cluster of faked grammatical analysis.
April 9 at 11:49pm · Like · 7

Ryan Edel Hi Patrick, I'm sorry to hear you feel this way about the assignment. Please let me know if the revision assigned for Thursday is a bit more clear. I do my best to avoid assigning BS. That said, though, it's my hope that no one is ever fully prepared for an assignment. If the work is easy enough that you can knock out a couple pages without thinking about it, then I haven't quite done my job. The downside, though, is that I tend to err on the side of making things challenging to the point of confusing, so I encourage folks to ask questions in class and on Facebook. For every question asked, there are usually several people (myself included) who didn't realize that the question needed to be asked. --Ryan
April 10 at 8:51pm · Like

Student Anger on Facebook

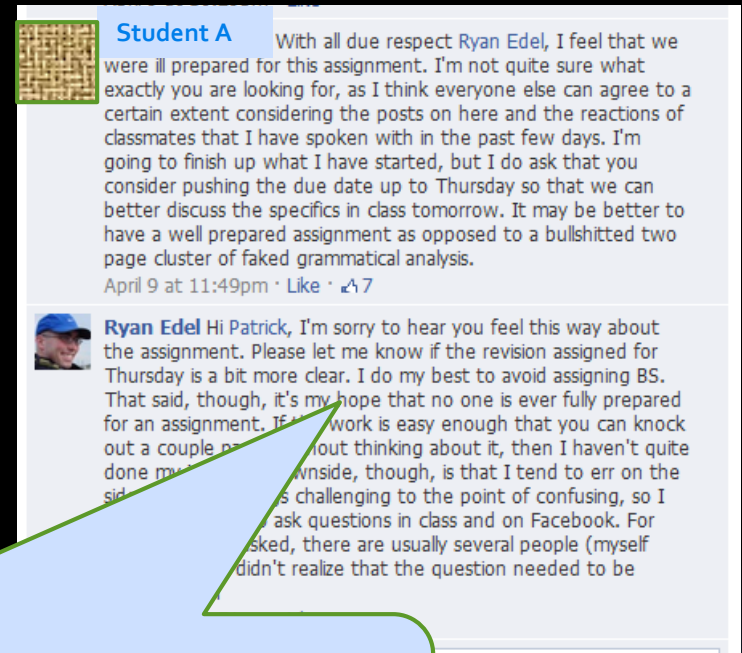
- Student is unhappy: "It may be better to have a well prepared assignment as opposed to a bullsh**ed two page cluster of faked grammatical analysis."

7 Likes



Student Anger on Facebook

- Student is unhappy: "It may be better to have a well prepared assignment as opposed to a bullsh**ed two page cluster of faked grammatical analysis."



It took over an hour to compose an appropriate response.




Major Causes of Disconnect


- Many students produced incomplete research regarding subjects they were passionate about – they didn't understand why their grades didn't match their enthusiasm.
- This major project was meant as an intense introduction to CHAT and to writing research – and it was the first major source of feedback and grades.

Critical Inquiry Stopped Cold

- Vocal and Widespread Resistance Led to Perception that the Project Itself Was Flawed...and Who Wants to Invest in That?
- Workshop Faltered: You Can't Critique a Classmate Who Criticizes the Teacher




Solutions: Bidirectional Scaffolding Through Pedagogy

- Establish Expectations Early with Thought-Provoking Assignments and Critical Feedback
 - Discuss Your Teaching Style, and Invite Critique from Students
 - Invite Student Contributions to the Structure of Major Assignments
- 



Solutions: Ongoing Student Self-Assessment

- Discuss Multiplicity of Approaches
 - Ask How the Project Is Going...with Baby Steps
 - Combine Positive and Negative Feedback
 - Grades and Feedback Should Correlate
- 



Solutions: Ongoing Student Self-Assessment

- 
- Discuss Multiplicity of Approaches
 - Ask How the Project Is Going




Note: Students Conduct Ongoing Informal Self-Assessment


(i.e. They Stress About Grades)

Overall Goal: Students Use Scaffolding to Self-Assess

- Instructor's Early Feedback Gives Baseline
- Inviting Critique of Pedagogy Leads Students to Consider Personal Investment in Projects
- Ongoing Discussion of Assessment Allows Students to Gauge Progress Before Submitting Projects for Grading



The Project that Worked: November Novel Writing

- 10,000 Words in 30 Days ($\frac{1}{5}$ NaNoWriMo).
 - Students selected a small section (4-8pp) for discussion board and in-class workshop.
- 

How Pedagogy Was Discussed

Long-Form Handwritten Quizzes

- Question for Students: Did My Quiz Ask You the Right Questions? (Answer: Sort of...not.)

Discussing the Project Goals

- Should We Try Collaborative Novels?
(Answer: Please Don't Make Us Do That!)
- From the Teacher: "These Are the Novels I've Tried to Write...This Is Why I Keep Trying."



Pedagogical Reassurance

Not Everyone Enjoyed Writing the 10,000 Word Story...Not at First


- Discussed Alternative Approaches
- No, Starting a Novel Is Not Easy

...and That's Okay!





Major Differences: Projects and Demographics

- ENG 101 vs ENG 227
 - Research Presentation vs Creative Writing
 - Early vs Late Semester
 - Online Technologies vs Word Processing
 - Rubric Grading vs Completion Grading
- 



Wrap-Up and Questions

Please feel free to e-mail:

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Pedagogy versus Edutainment

- What does it mean to learn?
 - Encouraging Creativity vs Dictating Rules
 - Edutainment: Competing with Netflix and Twitter
- 




Fact

- *Movies have a higher visual and emotional bandwidth than textbooks.*
- 



Facebook: Evolution of Communication

- Students become "addicted" to Facebook because it offers the kind of social connection which human beings require in order to be a part of society.
 - We can use this to our advantage as we foster student interactions outside the classroom.
- 

Check This Out: Asynchronous Connection

Question



Student A

are the assessment questions due tomorrow?

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · May 2 at 12:48pm near Normal



Student B Yes Kellz

May 2 at 1:46pm via mobile · Like



Student A ugh

May 2 at 1:47pm · Like



Student C I think if we get them done and post them to moodle then we shouldn't have to go to class tomorrow!

May 2 at 2:11pm · Like · 1



Student D We have time during class tomorrow to finish them if that helps...

May 2 at 2:13pm · Like · 1



Student E so we don't have to do it tonight we can just wait until tomorrow in class?

May 2 at 3:48pm · Like · 2



Ryan Edel That's right, you'll have time in class tomorrow to work on them. But I recommend getting as much done before class as you can - I have to make sure everyone's surveys are complete before we can wrap the semester, but I'd like to let you all head out early if possible. --Ryan

May 2 at 7:56pm · Like

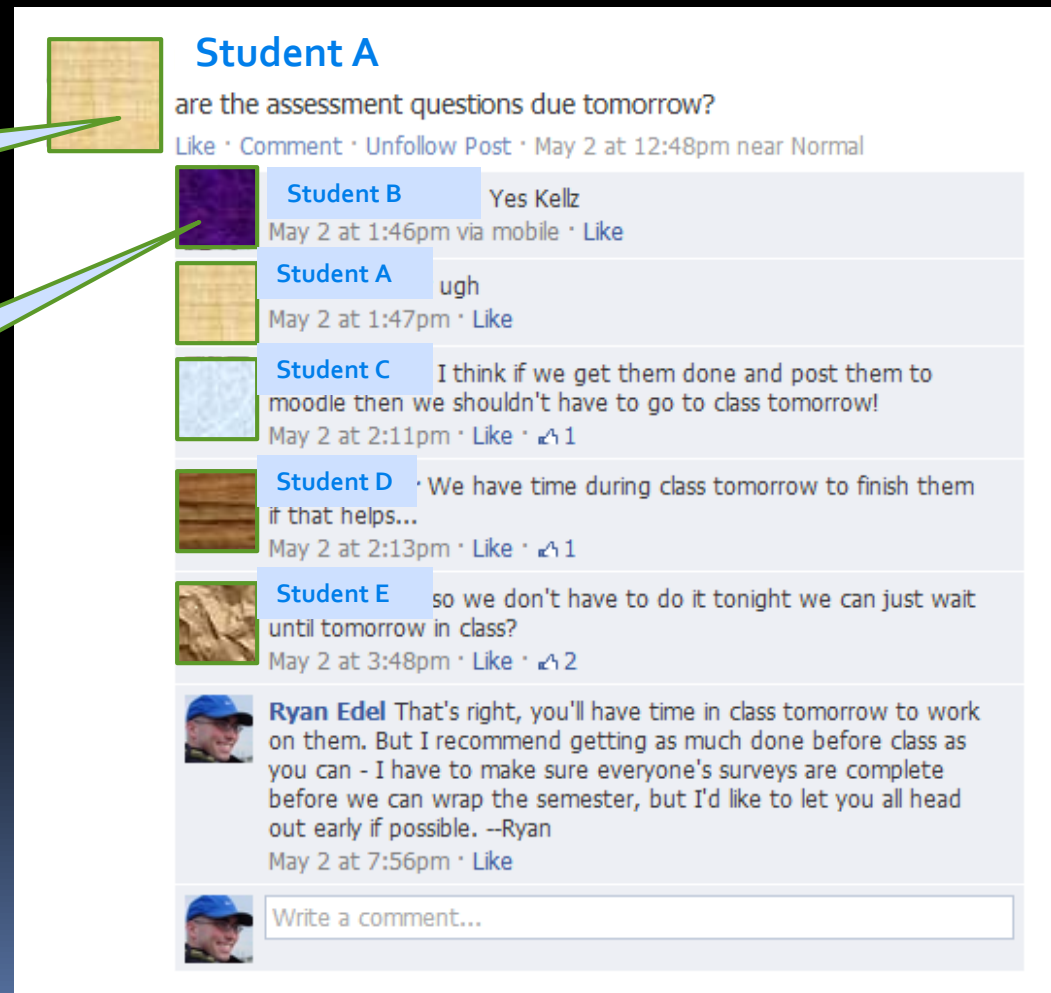


Write a comment...

Check This Out: Asynchronous Connection

Question

Answer



The screenshot shows a social media thread with the following content:

- Student A** (question mark icon): are the assessment questions due tomorrow?
Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · May 2 at 12:48pm near Normal
- Student B** (purple icon): Yes Kellz
May 2 at 1:46pm via mobile · Like
- Student A** (question mark icon): ugh
May 2 at 1:47pm · Like
- Student C** (blue icon): I think if we get them done and post them to moodle then we shouldn't have to go to class tomorrow!
May 2 at 2:11pm · Like · 1
- Student D** (wood icon): We have time during class tomorrow to finish them if that helps...
May 2 at 2:13pm · Like · 1
- Student E** (leaves icon): so we don't have to do it tonight we can just wait until tomorrow in class?
May 2 at 3:48pm · Like · 2
- Ryan Edel** (blue cap icon): That's right, you'll have time in class tomorrow to work on them. But I recommend getting as much done before class as you can - I have to make sure everyone's surveys are complete before we can wrap the semester, but I'd like to let you all head out early if possible. --Ryan
May 2 at 7:56pm · Like

At the bottom, there is a text input field with the placeholder text "Write a comment..." and a small profile picture of Ryan Edel.

Check This Out: Asynchronous Connection

Question

Answer

Clarifications

The screenshot shows a social media thread with the following content:

- Student A** (Profile picture: yellow grid) asks: "are the assessment questions due tomorrow?" (May 2 at 12:48pm near Normal)
- Student B** (Profile picture: purple) replies: "Yes Kellz" (May 2 at 1:46pm via mobile)
- Student A** (Profile picture: yellow grid) replies: "ugh" (May 2 at 1:47pm)
- Student C** (Profile picture: light blue) replies: "I think if we get them done and post them to moodle then we shouldn't have to go to class tomorrow!" (May 2 at 2:11pm)
- Student D** (Profile picture: brown wood) replies: "We have time during class tomorrow to finish them if that helps..." (May 2 at 2:13pm)
- Student E** (Profile picture: brown wood) replies: "so we don't have to do it tonight we can just wait until tomorrow in class?" (May 2 at 3:48pm)
- Ryan Edel** (Profile picture: blue cap) replies: "That's right, you'll have time in class tomorrow to work on them. But I recommend getting as much done before class as you can - I have to make sure everyone's surveys are complete before we can wrap the semester, but I'd like to let you all head out early if possible. --Ryan" (May 2 at 7:56pm)

A blue bracket on the right side of the thread groups the replies from Student B through Student E. On the left, three callout boxes labeled "Question", "Answer", and "Clarifications" point to the original question, the first reply, and the subsequent replies respectively.

Check This Out: Asynchronous Connection

Question

Answer

Clarifications

Teacher's
Addition

The screenshot shows a social media thread with the following content:

- Student A** (Profile picture: yellow grid): are the assessment questions due tomorrow?
Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · May 2 at 12:48pm near Normal
- Student B** (Profile picture: purple): Yes Kellz
May 2 at 1:46pm via mobile · Like
- Student A** (Profile picture: yellow grid): ugh
May 2 at 1:47pm · Like
- Student C** (Profile picture: light blue): I think if we get them done and post them to moodle then we shouldn't have to go to class tomorrow!
May 2 at 2:11pm · Like · ↻ 1
- Student D** (Profile picture: wood grain): We have time during class tomorrow to finish them if that helps...
May 2 at 2:13pm · Like · ↻ 1
- Student E** (Profile picture: brown): so we don't have to do it tonight we can just wait until tomorrow in class?
May 2 at 3:48pm · Like · ↻ 2
- Ryan Edel** (Profile picture: man in blue cap): That's right, you'll have time in class tomorrow to work on them. But I recommend getting as much done before class as you can - I have to make sure everyone's surveys are complete before we can wrap the semester, but I'd like to let you all head out early if possible. --Ryan
May 2 at 7:56pm · Like

Callouts from the left side of the slide point to specific elements in the thread:

- The "Question" callout points to the original post by Student A.
- The "Answer" callout points to the first reply by Student B.
- The "Clarifications" callout points to the replies by Student C and Student D.
- The "Teacher's Addition" callout points to the reply by Ryan Edel.


A blue bracket on the right side of the thread groups the replies from Student B through Student E.

Facebook vs Traditional CMS

- Imagine an educational tool which pinged your students whenever there was an update...without the hassle of e-mails they'll ignore.
- *Now imagine that it only pinged students with updates to conversations they were already following...*



Specific Uses of Facebook

- Disseminate Information
 - Share Student Work
 - Update Assignment Requirements
- 

Sharing Documents...

- All my lovely documents...

The screenshot shows a web interface for a document sharing space. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the title 'ENG 101 Spring 2012' and a lock icon, followed by tabs for 'About', 'Events', 'Photos', and 'Files'. Below the navigation bar, there is a filter dropdown set to 'All' and two buttons: '+ Create Doc' and '+ Upload File'. The main content area displays a list of documents, each with a document icon, a title, and a timestamp with the author's name.

Document Title	Timestamp	Author
Grassroots Approaches	April 19 at 1:09am	Ryan Edel
Example Drafts for Thursday	April 17 at 2:13pm	Ryan Edel
Updated Schedule for Project 3 - Grassroots	April 8 at 6:16pm	Ryan Edel
Genre Assignment for April 10th	April 5 at 1:46pm	Ryan Edel
Post Revised Hubs Here	March 7 at 12:52pm	Ryan Edel
1-Mar Workshop	February 24 at 2:04pm	Ryan Edel
23-Feb Workshop	February 15 at 9:30pm	Ryan Edel

Sharing Student Work...

12 Comments



Ryan Edel created a doc.

Post Revised Hubs Here

If you've revised your Hub, please post the link here in the comments. This will help me keep track of all the Hubs for regrading (my e-mail has been flooded the past few days with department news, so I don't want to lose track of anyone's.)

Thanks,
Ryan

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · March 7 at 12:52pm

Student A likes this.

View all 12 comments



Student B

Title of Work

According to writer Simon Mirren a writer on the television series Criminal Mind...

[See More](#)

May 4 at 8:00pm · Like · Remove Preview

Sharing Calendar Updates...

- Ahh...the new calendar...

Updated Schedule for Project 3 - Grassroots

By Ryan Edel in ENG 101 Spring 2012 (Files) · [Edit Doc](#) · [Delete](#)

Here's the updated schedule for the remainder of the semester. Please let me know of any questions. -- Ryan

Week 13 - Apr 8-14

Continue work on Grassroots Example and begin Progress Journal.

Week 14 - Apr 15-21

Rough Draft Example Section of Grassroots and Progress Journal due on **Thursday, April 19th.**

- The Progress Journal simply consists of your research notes and annotations you've made. I recommend having five pages of material ready by this deadline (includes both the progress journal and your example piece.)

Week 15 - Apr 22-28

Final Draft Example and Grassroots Article due In-Class on **Thursday, April 26th.**

- 10pp minimum - double spaced, size 12 font, 1" margins.
- The Grassroots Article is the discussion of how you wrote your example. It should be a minimum of 5pp of the allotted 10pp.
- In addition to the 10pp, you're encouraged to include an appendix with your notes and any sections of text you deleted from the final project.

Week 16 - Apr 29-May 5

Writing Program Assessment

This week, we'll also be putting together final portfolios from the three projects you've done for class. Please have your Project 1 PowerPoints, Project 2 Bibliographies and Notes, and all Project 3 Materials handy on a thumb-drive. If you have handwritten materials you'd also like to include, you can simply take digital images of them.

Thursday, May 3rd is the last day for submission of make-up work, write-ups, and extensions on Project 3.

Sharing Calendar Updates...

- Ahh...the new calendar...
- I wanted my students to read the calendar off the course blog...and they copied it to Facebook

Updated Schedule for Project 3 - Grassroots

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Real-Time Activities

- Do not underestimate the power of Facebook for in-class activities.
- 



Real-Time Activities

- Do not underestimate the power of Facebook for in-class activities.
 - *Small groups can post their observations to the Facebook Group.*
- 



Real-Time Activities


- Do not underestimate the power of Facebook for in-class activities.
- *Small groups can post their observations to the Facebook Group.*
- *You can show the group comments onscreen with the projector, allowing you to highlight comments from more students than you can listen to.*



Encourage Greater Discussion




Encourage Greater Discussion

- You know the quiet student in the front row who never speaks up?
- 




Encourage Greater Discussion

- You know the quiet student in the front row who never speaks up?
 - What about the one in the corner who thinks your class is way more dull than YouTube?
- 




Encourage Participation

- You know the quiet student in the front row who never speaks up?
 - What about the one in the corner who thinks your class is way more dull than YouTube?
 - Oh, and the twenty-two of your students who *aren't* the talkative one who answers *every* question...
- 




How to Maximize Discussions

- Rotate Conversation Roles
 - Require Back-and-Forth
 - Keep It Interesting
- 





Question of the Day



- *Is Facebook grammar really any worse than their e-mail style? (Think register in linguistics...)*
- 



Dangers of Facebook

- Student Informality
 - Student Resistance
 - Higher Student Demands
- 

- 
- *If we think of Facebook as a genre of writing, then the genre of Facebook becomes a genre of the classroom.*
- 

- 
- 
- *If we think of Facebook as a genre of writing, then the genre of Facebook becomes a genre of the classroom.*
 - *This is a naturally terrifying phenomenon.*




What This Means

- Facebook brings us closer to our students...
- 





What This Means

- Facebook brings us closer to our students...
 - *...but close is not always comfortable.*
- 



Further Research Is Needed

- I don't currently have IRB approval to conduct behavioral research on undergraduate students...
- 

- 
- **Like** this slide if you are excited about the possibility that a graduate student might encourage educational theorists to adopt Facebook-style social networking as a new paradigm in education!
- 