

Fostering Purpose in Today's College Student through The One Book/ One Campus Initiative and Classroom Exercises in Reflection

**Lisa Liseno, Ph.D. , Assistant in Undergraduate Studies
Patrick Heaton, Assistant Dean of Students/Director of
New Student & Family Programs
Florida State University**

**Dalton Institute On College Student Values
February 3, 2011**



Overview of Presentation

- Fostering a sense of benevolence, purpose & passion in college students
- Faculty & Administrator perspectives on the shared book program and the implementation of it (for above purpose)
- Examples of assignments based on selected book (for above purpose)
- Challenges/plans for future



Quote from German Philosopher Immanuel Kant (1785):

“Intelligence, wit, judgment, and the other *talents* of the mind...are undoubtedly good and desirable in many respects; but these gifts of nature may also become extremely bad and mischievous if the will which is to make use of them, and which, therefore, constitutes what is called *character*, is not good.”

Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals, Immanuel Kant, 1785



What is the Instructor's Role?

...to help produce students who have knowledge & a good will – who use their knowledge for benevolent purposes

The Role of “Purpose” for Students:

- Affect on student motivation & academic success:
sense of purpose → motivation → academic success
- Shared Book Program – one opportunity to bring out this purpose!



Successful Common Reading

Laufgraben (2006) identified five key factors that successful summer reading programs share:

1. clearly articulated goals with activities planned in alignment with these goals
2. partnerships that are built across campus
3. sustained initiatives embedded in campus culture
4. innovative and creative, and
5. assessment for future program improvement.



Common Reading Goals

To best contribute to student success (personal and academic development) , a common reading initiative must strive for:

1. modeling academic behaviors,
2. setting expectations for student success,
3. fostering involvement, and
4. promoting meaningful learning.



Select Common Reading Learning Outcomes

- Promote learning with and from others through intra-and inter-disciplinary dialogue
- Increase students' awareness/appreciation of diverse cultures, social issues, belief systems, and human experiences
- Challenge students' values and beliefs, world view, and sense of purpose
- Create an opportunity for student values clarification and goal setting



FSU One Book / One Campus Common Reading Goals

- Begin Seminole Sensation Week and the academic year for first-year students with an academically focused experience.
- Allow participating students to experience a college-level academic discussion through a challenging and non-threatening atmosphere.
- Provide a common experience that creates a community dialogue for students, faculty, staff, and administrators around a shared theme.
- Provide an opportunity for student and faculty interaction outside of the classroom – supporting the belief that student/faculty relationships should and do extend beyond the classroom.



Examples of Campus Partnerships

Academic Affairs:

- Course related discussion, writing, & debate
- Community essay contest
- Library programming
- Convocation speaker; campus expert panels/speakers bureau
- Special population outreach

Student Affairs:

- Related arts, music, film series
- Campus lecture series
- Residence hall and student activities programming
- Service initiatives
- Social network programming & feedback opportunities
- Community outreach & involvement



Applying the shared book program (by faculty/in the classroom)

- Well aligned with faculty goals (producing well-rounded, successful students)
- Specific examples of assignments based on selected book
- Student responses to these assignments



Journal Entry Assignment from The Last Lecture

- Read Chapter 7 of *The Last Lecture*, “I Never Made It to the NFL”. Then consider the following quote from this chapter and answer the two questions given below the quote.
- Quote from page 36: “As a college professor, I’ve seen this as one lesson so many kids ignore, always to their detriment: You’ve *got* to get the fundamentals down, because otherwise the fancy stuff is not going to work.”
- 1. How did Coach Graham teach this lesson to Randy’s team
- 2. How can you apply this lesson to your academic life here at FSU? Think about what “fundamentals” you might need to get down before moving on to the “fancy stuff.” (You may want to take a look at your answers to homework #1: The Self Assessment Questionnaire)



Journal Entry Assignment from The Last Lecture

Read Chapter 6 of *The Last Lecture*, “Getting to Zero G”. Then consider the following lesson from this chapter and answer the two questions given below.

- One of the **main lessons** from this chapter is: Don’t let obstacles make you abandon your goals. This is the difference between merely being a goal setter and being a goal reacher.
- 1. **What was Randy’s goal in this chapter? How did Randy find a way around obstacles to reach his goal?**
- 2. **Describe a goal that you are worried you might not reach because of outside circumstances/obstacles. What are these obstacles? How could you find a way around these obstacles?**



Journal Entry Assignment from The Last Lecture

Read Chapter 28 of *The Last Lecture*, “Dream Big” - then review the lesson and the quote from that selection that is given below, and answer the question that then follows.

One of the **main lessons** of this chapter is: Inspiration is the ultimate tool for doing good.

Quote from pages 132-3: “When you use money to fight poverty it can be of great value, but too often, you’re working at the margins. When you’re putting people on the moon, you’re inspiring all of us to achieve the maximum of human potential, which is how our greatest problems will eventually be solved.”

- **Apply this quote a problem you think needs solving, for example, world hunger or poverty. Instead of sending your extra money to organizations that send food to people in need of it, what might you do instead?**



Thought of the Day from This I believe

- For next time, read “Be Cool to the Pizza Dude” on page 7, and think about the following:
 1. What does the author say our reflections on how we treat people, such as the pizza delivery guy, can teach us about ourselves and various virtues?
 2. For the next couple of days, be careful to observe the everyday occurrences around you. Then write a short passage in which you explain how you have discovered a “life lesson” in your observation of one of these everyday, ordinary occurrences.



Thought of the Day from This I believe

- For next time, read “A Shared Moment of Trust” on page 34, and then think about the following:
 1. What does this essay teach you about your responsibility to yourself and others?
 2. According to this essay, what characteristics does a “successful” society need to have, and why?



Thought of the day from This I Believe

- For next time, read “Science Nourishes the Mind and the Soul” on page 93, and then think about the following:

One of the main lessons of this essay is that “Such is the capacity of science, not only to explain, but to inspire” p. 95

How do you hope that studying science will serve to inspire purpose or passion for you?



Lessons Learned/Challenges/Plans for Future

- Focus the rationale for your program.
- Define program success within the context of your institution and student population.
- Create meaningful connections and partnerships across the institution.
- Implementation Challenges
- Innovations
- Faculty awareness & “buy-in”: concrete applications to classes



QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION



Contacts

Lisa Liseno, Ph.D.

Assistant in Undergraduate Studies/Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)
Florida State University

(850) 645-8215 lliseno@admin.fsu.edu <http://ace.fsu.edu>

Patrick Heaton

Assistant Dean of Students/Director of New Student & Family Programs
Florida State University

(850) 644-2785 PHeaton@admin.fsu.edu www.nsfp.fsu.edu

www.newnole.fsu.edu

