CHARACTER AND CURRICULUM

EIGHT QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

I. Who is talking about Character?
   A. Walter Mischel (Stanford Psychologist -- 1960s Marshmallow Test)
   C. Carol Dweck in *Mindset*
   D. David Heckman (U Chicago – Nobel Prize for Economics)
   F. Skip Downing in *On Course*
   H. Mike Rose “Giving Cognition a Bad Name” (Blog)
   I. Richard Paul and Linda Elder: Foundation for Critical Thinking
   J. *Common Core Standards* (adopted in 45 states for K-12)
   K. *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (K-16 Connections)

II. Which Character Values are identified?
   A. Costa and Kallick: Habits of Mind
   B. Downing: Habits for Student Success
   C. Paul and Elder: Intellectual Virtues

III. Can these Habits/Virtues be taught in first-year seminar classes?
   Examples
   A. Downing “Choices of Successful Students”
   B. Downing: Exercise from *On Course* for Critical Thinking

IV. Can these Habits/Virtues be taught in credit courses across the curriculum?
   Examples
   A. Cognitive Skills Identified with Assignments and Tests
   B. Cognitive Questions Connected to Analysis of Text Chapters
   C. Cognitive Questions and Habits of Mind Connected with Personal Decisions
V. How does student adoption of these Habits/Virtues occur?
A. Students Identify Completion of Tasks with Present and Future Success
B. Students Learn to Value Revision of Writing
C. Students Have Opportunities to Practice In-Class Writing and Tests and Value Time Spent
D. Anecdotes about Successful Students and Professionals

VI. What do instructors need to know about their students for Content and Character?
A. Past Semester
B. Current Semester: First Month Review
C. Answers to Questions about Students and Habits of Mind/Virtues

VII. Do instructors need to change their entire approach to coursework in the class?
A. Try CT vocabulary as requirement for one assignment.
B. Try CT vocabulary as revision of one assignment. (Compare)
C. Try one CT assignment to ask students to connect with personal situations.

VIII. Can Paul/Elder Vocabulary Be Learned and Used by Students in One Semester?
A. Students demonstrate knowledge of Elements/Standards/Virtues.
B. Students use the vocabulary in completing written assignments.
C. Students discuss content issues using Elements and Standards.
D. CT on Essay (beginning of semester)/ CT on Essay (end of semester)

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