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Alexandru Roman TSSA Winter 2016

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Name of Conference Attended:

2016 Lilly Conference, Newport Beach, California, February 18-21, 2016.

Teaching Strategy Studied:

At the conference I studied/reviewed/participated in sessions that dealt with developing effective assessments of learning. I was also interested in learning about the most effective techniques proven to enhance student engagement online.

Things That I Learnt:

1. Certain assessment techniques are “better” than others are (not all assessments are created “equal”).
2. It is critical to align assessment structures/assignments with learning objectives.
3. It is recommended to discuss/link assessments with course learning objectives. In simple terms - let students know the logic/rationale and the scope of the assessments and the design of the course.
4. It has been shown that engaging students in the design of their own class assessment structures is rather effective.
5. While difficult to achieve, “genuine” engagement is possible in online environments.
6. Sometimes even simple things/approaches/”tricks of the trade” (e.g., assigning a discussion leader for each group, pre-assigning questions and case-studies) can have a meaningful impact on generating engagement.
7. Materials (e.g., case studies, questions) have to be adaptive/responsive/relevant to students’ interests and current events/practice needs.

Impact on/How Applied to Current Teaching:

1. I have partially redesigned several assessment structures in two of my courses.
2. I have redesigned my online discussion sessions around case studies.
3. I have included students in the discussion on how their learning should be assessed.