

Insights-Resources-Applications (IRAs)

Our second teaching tip this semester is a student engagement technique (SET) that is designed for online courses, though it is easily modified for face-to-face courses, and that adaptation is included. This SET challenges students to identify and reflect on their learning, relate the learning to their personal experience, and seek other related sources to extend their knowledge and understanding of the themes or information in the text.

Our Spring 2012 teaching tips are gleaned from Dr. Elizabeth Barkley's text, *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty* (Jossey-Bass, 2010). The author will be our guest at the Teaching and Creativity Center's June 15 event, and copies of her book are available in each of the TCC rooms (5-091 at DCC and 12-201 at Brighton).

SET #32 (pp. 287-88) Directions:

1. Identify a reading that is appropriate for the kinds of reflection and personal connections required by this SET. Create directions that ask students to write a brief assignment that includes the following parts:

a. Insights (I): Three one-sentence bullet points that represent new understandings about the meaning or nature of the topic in the reading.

b. Resource (R): One additional resource such as a book, article, website, film, or news item that has similar thoughts, ideas or themes that expand on what is found in the reading.

c. Application (A): A paragraph that relates the reading to an example from the student's current or past experience.

2. Create a threaded discussion forum for the IRAs and ask students to post theirs and then read and comment on at least two other students' IRAs by a deadline. Encourage students to make substantive comments by suggesting that they identify similarities and differences between various students' posting, connect ideas to previous readings, and/or provide additional insights or resources.

Face-to-face variation: Ask students to bring their written assignments to class and exchange them with a partner. After they have had a few minutes to read the shared work, ask them to compare and contrast their ideas.