



Melanie Mowinski

Professor of Art

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

375 Church Street | North Adams, MA 01247

melanie.mowinski@mcla.edu

<https://www.instagram.com/melaniemowinski>

<http://melaniemowinski.com/>



Andrea S.D. Hazzard, EDD

Certified Developmental Education Instructor

Assessment Coach

College of the Marshall Islands

PO Box 1258

Majuro, MH 96960

ahazzard@cmi.edu

Valuing Student Voices Through Talking Cards

Melanie Mowinski, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts | Andrea S.D. Hazzard, College of the Marshall Islands

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ABSTRACT

Faculty often struggle with student participation, ranging from over-zealous students to those more reluctant to contribute. Inspired by universal design principles, talking cards assist with diverse learner needs. This poster will showcase how Talking Cards help create an environment that recognizes each student's voice and fosters an inclusive classroom.

BACKGROUND

Collaboration via conversations about pedagogy between faculty regarding teaching challenges, specifically in response to a highly verbal student who dominated class discussion.

- Recognizing the value of fostering time and space for faculty to discuss pedagogy
- Conversation between developmental education and content specialists can lead to better pedagogy

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

UNIVERSAL DESIGN (CAST, n.d.; Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014)

- What is best for students considered 'at-risk' or 'underprepared', i.e., students in the margins, often is best practice for all students.
- Reducing learning barriers creates accessibility and promotes student engagement.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987; Freire, 1970)

- Social justice in the classroom means mitigating dominant student voices such that all student voices are welcomed and heard.
- Instructors plays a vital role in creating equitable learning environments where power, often appropriated by a few, is shared among all students.

NON-COGNITIVE FACTORS

- Increased sociocultural awareness about turn-taking in the classroom.
- Increased self-awareness of one's degree of contribution/participation in the classroom
- Increased motivation and self-confidence to participate in the classroom.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

What was the best part of using Talking Cards in class?

- "The lack of chaos and the lack of one person answering every question."
- "It encouraged quieter students to participate."

What was the hardest part of using Talking Cards in class?

- "Having to budget my responses. That feeling would probably vary based on the number of students in the class and if the class were more or less complex, i.e: if a particular topic left me with many questions and there were not enough students to ask all of those questions."
- "Being confused and unable to ask questions because I had run out of cards."

Describe how Talking Cards impacted your overall experience.

- "Talking Cards allowed everyone a chance at speaking in each class session."
- "As someone who regularly participates in class discussions I found it frustrating to be limited to only three comments or questions. They kept me from expressing myself."

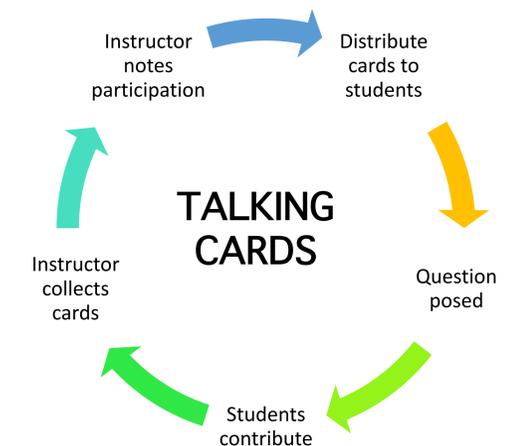
Suggestions for future use?

- "More than three cards for classes longer than an hour."
- "Count as discussion cards only so that students feel free to ask questions if they are struggling without giving up a valuable talking card."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

TALKING CARDS allow the instructor to create an inclusive classroom climate. They introduce student strategies for classroom participation: when to participate, when to pull back.

- Establish ground rules for card use. For example, use only for discussion, questions for assignment clarification are not included, etc.
- Distribute 1-3 cards per student. Each card has a space on the back for their name.
- Collect cards as students participate.
- Use one or all of the cards through class participation by end of class period or end of week, depending on course design.
- Cards can be tied to participation grade, or not.



MOVING FORWARD

- Incorporate students' feedback into Talking Cards use
 - ◊ Take into account use of cards for discussion vs. questions for clarification.
 - ◊ Pilot different number of Talking Cards for different class periods (i.e., lengths of time).
- Employ formative assessment to improve the use of Talking Cards within a course during the semester.
- Utilize summative assessment to investigate extent to which non-cognitive factors are impacted by use of Talking Cards.

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