Challenging Assumptions

Using Appreciative Inquiry to Transform Teaching and Learning

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Appreciative Inquiry

- AI is a process for change, based on what works
- In every classroom, something works
- Generative group process to look at what works
- Not a problem-solving process
- Makes a space for change, not the change itself
- Results in ideas that describe where people want to be, based on innovative ideas that grow out of the high moments of where they have been
Assumptions about teachers

- What do we assume teachers KNOW?
- What do teachers to DO in the classroom?
- What do teachers DO in the clinical, lab, or field setting?
What do we assume about our students? What are our students like?

- Knowledge
- Behavior
- Attitude
- Ideas about learning
- Ideas about teachers
- Ideas about learning environment
What works for you? Being the Storyteller

- Tell about a time when you were teaching and something happened that really worked for you and your students, a time when you felt fulfilled, successful, JOYFUL about your role as a teacher? Describe how you felt.

- Tell this like a story – set the stage. Who was there? What was the context? What made the situation possible?
Being the Listener

• Title the story
• What assumptions were challenged?
Moving from recognizing assumptions to challenging assumptions and then to generating new ideas
What if?

- What if we had no required textbook?
- What if we gave no homework?
- What if they didn’t need a teacher?
- What if a teacher could travel with a group of students through a whole program?
- What if we didn’t give exams?
- What if it is a lie that we can test all the things we say we can?
- What if students know more than we do?
- What if we expect too much?
- What if we expect too little?
- What if content isn’t king?
- What if they don’t need to know all this?
Here’s an innovative idea . . .

• In the course syllabus, list only suggested textbooks, with annotations regarding content, organization, style, usefulness, limitations, including cost

• Encourage students to choose the text that matches how they think

• Consider the classroom where students are using different texts – what would discussions be like?
Innovative Ideas

Innovative ideas describe an ideal state of circumstances that will foster the climate that creates the possibilities to do more of what works.
What if?