# Initial Professor Data & Observations

I just finished grading the fictional discussion board rubric evaluation assignment and the results are very interesting.  I wanted to grade this right away because I suspected it might require some discussion tonight.

Of the 18 students, only 1 student matched my grades.

All the students agreed that Donald Duck deserved a 10 (full credit).  All the students agreed that Luke Skywalker deserved a 6 (original post didn’t cover everything requested and replies were minimal).

Despite my hint during the synchronous session and homework review lecture that 1 of the students deserved a 0 for plagiarism and the hints during both that they would find the stolen material in the mission and vision lecture content, only half the students got this one right.  Half of the students gave the plagiarizer good scores.

Of the 18 students, only 3 matched my grade for Leslie Knope.  Of the 15 remaining, 4 struggled with the conversation enabler point (get credit after Friday if someone replies) and 11 of them interpreted the long post as meaningful.

Of the 18 students, only 1 matched my grade for Tyrion Lannister.  The remaining 17 interpreted the very short post as lacking meaningful connections that I saw and thought it didn’t address everything requested.  Some of the students explained their rationale well and I gave them full credit.  Some of the students included in their rationale that they didn’t agree with the post, and for those I did not give them credit for the rationale.  I plan to walk through it tonight to show them that while the student did indeed answer everything I asked for, 17/18 had trouble finding it and they should think about that when they are barely meeting what is requested (smile).

--From Beth

# Follow-up after discussion with students

Caitlin – There were MANY teachable moments in the fictional discussion board.  This assignment was EXCELLENT!  Because I graded it in the morning before the synchronous session, we were able to talk about it during the virtual class.  The plagiarism was definitely a teaching moment, and one of many.  We spent some time talking about long not necessarily being meaningful and that they can make it easier for me if they are clearly answering the question.  I think it is helpful that they saw such a wide range in grades that the students assigned and they have a sense of how hard it is to grade these.  I had a few students comment that it was easier to do the assignment than to grade it.

The quality of the first assignments they submitted (executive summary critiques) was excellent and I think this assignment helped to guide that.  I have also been reinforcing the rubric by giving detailed feedback.  In the first assignment that had multiple parts, I responded to anyone that gave me section headings with “Thanks for setting this up to be so easy to follow.”

Last week was the first time I was using the rubric that referred to critical thinking (other than the fictional discussion board) and I was very specific if I gave them that credit.  It forced me to identify what represented critical thinking before I offered credit and reinforces it for the students.  For example, for one I gave full credit and offered the following feedback: “You showed good connections to the pricing lecture material. You showed critical thinking with your discussion of the tip jar and advice to track sales and experiment with the pricing.”  I really think this will help them understand what is expected.

--From Beth

# Mid-course

I’ve been reading through the discussion board for this week (due Sunday night) and the conversation is excellent!  I think that fictional discussion board really helped them.  The current discussion board is reviewing Shark Tank videos and they are really getting the point that an elevator pitch is different than a technical briefing.  We’ll have to wait until the last week to see if it translates into better pitches to The Sharks.  –from Beth

🡪 Student mid-course survey also commented that the rubrics were detailed and they understood expectations

# Final Conclusions

In one online class where the material was revised as part of the Faculty Institute, there was improvement in the critical thinking demonstrated by the students. There were two factors that contribute to this. First, the Faculty Institute instruction on creating assessments aligned with objectives and reviewing possible assessment techniques changed the way the instructor developed the assessment. Instead of a discussion board assignment with some summary followed by some discussion, the assignment was split into a wiki page for the summary material and a targeted question for the discussion board intended to solicit critical thinking as response. In addition, a discussion board rubric was developed based on activity (initial post and at least 2 replies to other students) and quality (demonstrate critical thinking). A fictitious discussion board was used in the first week to demonstrate the rubric and the first assignment was for the students to grade the fictitious students using the rubric. The result was that every student in every discussion board assignment that followed for the rest of the class provided clear examples of critical thinking. The fictitious discussion board assignment provided clear examples of “good” discussion for the students and the improved discussion board design solicited critical thinking instead of summarized content from the students. Similar assignments delivered in previous versions of this class resulted in 20% of the students consistently exhibiting critical thinking vs. 100% in the revised class demonstrating critical thinking in applying course content.

🡪 from ASEE paper submission