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# NEWSLETTER

Greetings FCA Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! We hope that you all took some much deserved time to relax and enjoyed family as well as friends during the holidays. We are also optimistic that you reflected on the experiences of our latest convention in Orlando.

It is our wish that you had a great time and enjoyed the multitude of workshops, panels and papers that were presented on the topic of Critiquing Communication: Research, Pedagogy & Scholarship. We anticipate that you gained insightful teaching and research methods, saw great scholarship and connected with colleagues in the area. With numerous attendees and many sessions, we feel this year's convention was a great success.

We also want to thank everyone who was part of the event. Each member's hard work and dedication made the convention one to remember. As we reminisce on the commitment and enthusiasm of all, we are also already looking forward to next year with our new President, Donald Painter, and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Stephanie Jackson. If you have any suggestions you would like to offer us for next year's plans, please feel free to contact Stephanie Jackson at [sjackson@lynn.edu](mailto:sjackson@lynn.edu).

We hope to see everyone next year in Orlando and thanks for making this year's convention a memorable event!

Best,

FCA Board Members



Christine Hanlon with Keynote Speaker Greg Warmoth and Rick Brunson

## FLORIDA COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

### EXECUTIVE BOARD:

**WE HAVE YET TO IDENTIFY AN EDUCATIONAL LIAISON.  
IF YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED,  
PLEASE LET US KNOW.**

CONVENTION PHOTO RECAP



# CONGRATULATIONS

**Teacher of the Year:** Dr. Mariaelena Bartesaghi, University of South Florida

**FCA Service Award:**

Sue Easton, Rollins College

**FCA Student Scholarship:** Blake Paxton, University of South Florida

**Paper Awards**

Graduate

Patrick Dillon

University of South Florida

"Patient Participation in Primary Care Medical Interviews: Does Patients' Communication Influence Satisfaction with their Physician?"

Blake Paxton

University of South Florida

"It's Not Just Birds and Bees: Queering Safer Sex Talk Through Dialogic Theory"

Professional

Robert Gonzalez

University of Tampa

"Modern Creation Myths"

**Poster Session Awards**

Outstanding Undergraduate Poster

Robin Sibley

Rollins College

Outstanding Graduate Poster

George Colangelo

Seminole State College of Florida

Most Crowd Appeal

Sydney Gray

Alex Jacobs

Jessica Monteagudo

Amanda Palmeira

University of Central Florida

Best Oral Presentation

Sydney Gray

Alex Jacobs

Jessica Monteagudo

Amanda Palmeira

University of Central Florida



## THE CO-CONSTRUCTED CLASSROOM: INCREASING STUDENT INVOLVEMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, COMPREHENSION, AND RAPPORT

BY: Jacob Jenkins

### Overview

Much has been written about the virtues of a *co-constructed classroom* (see Jennings & O'Keefe, 1999; Sidelinger & Booth-Butterfield, 2010). Research consistently indicates that people learn more when they become engaged in the learning process (Armstrong, 2012; Bonwell & Eison, 1991). It is difficult, however, to actualize a room of undergraduate students who actively help to shape and guide course discussion. For this reason, the following article offers university instructors a simple pedagogical approach for engaging students in a way that results in co-constructed dialogue and discussion. In brief, students are asked a question about the course readings and then are encouraged to report out on their answers. Student responses are used as a starting point for class discussion, as the instructor elaborates, clarifies, and ensures that necessary concepts/theories from the reading(s) have been addressed. In the end, this method not only results in (a) co-constructed discussion, but also (b) fosters accountability for the course readings, (c) ensures comprehension of the material, and (d) builds rapport among students and between students and the instructor.

### Directions

1. Assign class readings per normal course procedures.
2. Rather than planning a formal lecture prior to class, determine the concepts needed to be covered via class discussion.
3. Begin the class by having students write a one-page response to the question: "What was the most interesting thing from today's readings? Be as specific as possible."
4. After students have had time to respond, give each of them an opportunity to report out on their answers.
5. Expand on each of the students' responses, using them as a starting point for group conversation, while also encouraging cross-talk among classmates. Use this time to clarify any misunderstandings and to elaborate with your own thoughts or examples.
6. When need be use the students' responses as a segue to the readings' previously determined main concepts.
7. Continue this procedure – asking for students' answers, while expanding, clarifying, and elaborating on their responses.

### Discussion

This approach to class discussion results in co-constructed dialogue because students are actively involved in the way that discussion unfolds. In contrast to the traditional, transmission model of classroom instruction – as typified by a lecture-style format – students help to determine the order in which topics are discussed, as well as the tone, rate, and pacing of that discussion. From my experience, students will typically mention interesting stories, examples, or antidotes from the reading, giving you a perfect entry point for further discussion. This approach also fosters accountability and I suggest emphasizing the need for students to write a *specific* response to the original writing prompt. In addition to asking what the most interesting thing was from the reading, you might also consider posing a second question that is more specific to the course reading – a question that addresses the readings' main concept or a particularly important idea. Third, this approach helps to ensure that students comprehended the assigned material by addressing topics of ambiguity in real-time. Students, for example, often comment on a point of uncertainty or disagreement. Such statements welcome the opportunity to clarify a major concept/theory that other students may have also found confusing. Conversely, students will sometimes comment incorrectly without realizing it. This allows you an opportunity to redirect their understanding about a given topic or concept. Finally, this approach to class discussion builds rapport among students and between students and the instructor. As instructor, I am always able to ensure that the discussion covers any concepts/theories from the reading that need to be addressed. The organic process by which we go about that discussion, however, results in a more natural and authentic class structure. In the end, students report that they feel valued in the classroom and that their voices have been heard.

### References

- Armstrong, J. S. (2012). Natural learning in higher education. *Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning*. Retrieved from <https://marketing.wharton.upenn.edu/files/?whdmsaction=public:main.file&fileID=3459>.
- Bonwell, C.; Eison, J. (1991). Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom. *AEHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1*. Washington, D.C.: Jossey-Bass.
- Jennings, L. B., & O'Keefe, T. (1999). Creating spaces for classroom dialogue: Co-constructing democratic classroom practices in first and second grade. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 34(2), 1-16.
- Sidelinger, R. J., & Booth-Butterfield, M. (2010). Co-constructing student involvement: An examination of teacher confirmation and student-to-student connectedness in the college classroom. *Communication Education*, 59(2), 165-184.

*We invite everyone to contribute their favorite assignment or activity. Please send your submission to: spowers@lynn.edu and use "FCA Teaching Tips" as your subject line.*