



Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning

Capturing the Semester with Photos

Stacy Van Horn

Associate Lecturer, Counselor Education and School Psychology

Rationale:

Photovoice can be a tool to capture a student's imagination and creativity in expressing themselves. I am using it at the end of a course to provide a way for students to summarize their experiences and concepts learned. It provides a way to reflect on their growth and development using photographs..

Description:

This semester, as I was navigating the remote learning environment, I was determined to continue to incorporate interactive, engaging and thoughtful activities in my classes. Throughout the semester I have become very comfortable using many of the Zoom features, such as polling, chat and white board; along with recording guest speakers, infusing videos clips into modules, and providing case studies on “pages”. All of these have been used throughout this semester, and as I was reflecting on the challenge of coming up with something original and innovative to bring closure to my classes, I stumbled upon something I was excited to introduce to students. It is photovoice. Photovoice was created in the early 1990’s and essentially it is a way for individuals to document their environments, communities, home with visuals that align with words. It is a way that I feel I can use with students through remote instruction to reflect on course concepts learned throughout the semester.

I have assigned students in my Integrated Learning designated course: Applied Practice in Career Services to take a photo with their smart phone (or digital camera) of their environment that captures a concept uncovered in the course. Each student has been placed in an out of class experience helping high school students and young adults in various settings around Central Florida on career and college readiness activities. Connecting a way for students to communicate their experiences with their emotions while being remote was a challenge, however, I think with this activity it can be done.

On the last day of class, I will have each student share their screen and show at least one photo that they took. Each student will use the Chat feature to guess what the concept is that is represented by the photograph taken. Then the student “photographer” will reveal the concept and the statement they wrote that communicates the connection between their visual and an idea learned. This is an ideal way to engage students remotely using themselves and photography (images) to summarize concepts from a class. It also is a way I hope to reveal inner most feelings and thoughts about their overall experience during such a challenging semester.

Since this assignment is one I just created and assigned to students, I do not have any attachments to share. However, I do look forward to ones I will be receiving in early December and thought it might be something I can share during the FCTL Winter Conference. Depending on the reaction, I can see modifying this activity in so many ways for additional classes and even when we go back face to face. Even expanding photovoice to record and reflect on out of class experiences, using it as a dialogue about important social justice issues, and enhancing group discussions on personal growth and development.

Appraisal:

I have not yet evaluated this tool for its effectiveness. I intend to gather student feedback at the end of this term.

References:

https://www.rutgers.international/sites/rutgersorg/files/PDF/PhotoVoice_Manual_18042016.pdf

Link or explanation: I do not have student samples yet, but will have them at the end of this term.



Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning