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Chapter 5

Pedagogical Values in Online and Blended Learning Environments in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Pedagogical values directly affect student performance and, therefore, are essential to successful teaching practice. It is absolutely critical that post-secondary educators examine and reflect on their pedagogical values because these principles pave the path for student success. This chapter describes four pedagogical values that are critical to student success within the context of online and blended learning environments in higher education: 1) value of care; 2) value of diversity; 3) value of community; and 4) value of justice.

INTRODUCTION

Many educators venture into the field without taking time to reflect on the pedagogical values they bring with them to the learning environment. When educators talk about pedagogy, often teaching strategies and assessment practices become the main topics of discussion. However, the pedagogical values that underpin specific educational practices are based in our worldviews, beliefs, perspectives, and biases

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about teaching and learning. What do you deem to be necessary for student success in various learning environments, and why? What do you deem to be important, and why? What do you deem to be beneficial, and why? Articulating your pedagogical values depends on critical reflection on such questions. So, why is it important to articulate our pedagogical values? In the big picture, broad knowledge about values serves as the foundation to a democratic educational experience (Heasley, 2015). On an individual level, this is important because the act of teaching is imbued with values as it encompasses ongoing personal choices in action, judgement, and evaluation (Gudmundsdottir, n.d.).

What educators believe about teaching and learning is critically important, because values drive practices that may be beneficial – or not – for learner success. What pedagogical values guide your own choices, actions, judgements, and evaluative decisions in your teaching practice? What worldviews, beliefs, and perspectives inform your values? Before responding to these questions, educators must first acknowledge that pedagogical decisions, actions, and behaviors aren't solely related to the development of content or design and development of learning activities. It is imperative that educators reflect on how they interact with students, how they engage students, how they support students, and how they aide in the holistic development of students, versus merely addressing content and outcomes (Lovat, Dally, Clement & Toomey, 2011). This chapter examines four essential pedagogical values that enhance student success: ethics of care, diversity, community, and justice.

We propose that when educators critically reflect on their pedagogical values, they can increase their effectiveness in building engaged, creative, and inclusive learning environments. Philosopher and educator Toulmin (1996) observes that we need well-founded ethical judgement to describe, explain, and improve practices in human studies, due to clear moral and political implications in their effects on people's lives. Toulmin also reminds us that criticism of value commitments in any science only have "bite" when assumptions, beliefs, and biases are not made explicit. In our view, the Western democratic ideals of education that emphasize inclusion and equitable participation are worth pursuing. One early statement of these ideals is Dewey's (1916) conception of education as a social process to create a desirable society, i.e. one that

makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through...equitably distributed interests. (p. 63, 64)

In one contemporary framing of these ideals, Veletsianos and Kimmons (2012) identify open scholarship values for the ideals of *democratization, fundamental human rights, equality, and justice* and *highlight challenges associated with the movement's aspirations of broadening access to education and knowledge*, such as the commodification of MOOCs, and unequal access to technology and/or lack of digital literacies. Veletsianos and Kimmons propose that,

scholars need to develop an understanding of participatory cultures and social/digital literacies in order to take full advantage of open scholarship.

Participatory Worldview

Educational researchers Reason and Bradbury (2001) state the participative worldview recognizes that being human means we are engaged in practical being and acting, always in relationship with others, and that our actions are grounded in our "inner work." These authors define participatory research (PR) as a:

democratic process concerned with practical knowing...[that] seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally, the flourishing of individual persons and their communities. (Reason & Bradbury, p. 1)

They also assert that the process of inquiry is equally important to specific outcomes because it leads not just to new practical knowledge but to new abilities to create knowledge (2001, p. 2). Similarly, adult educator Park (2001) describes PR as the down-to-earth cooperative inquiry process that happens when people who share problems in common decide together what the important issues are and how best to deal with them, in order to improve the life situations of the people involved. This participatory worldview makes a great deal of sense as an educational philosophy as well as a research methodology.

To learn our way out of complex social problems, we need to retrieve, articulate, and put into action ethics that recognize the importance of social bonds to individual well-being (Park, 1993, 2001; Taylor, 1991). Interpersonal action-values that form the critical base for creating inclusive, democratic learning communities together with informed, engaged learners include concepts of personal authenticity and responsibility, as well as caring and compassion for others (Buckley, 1996; Kingwell, 2001; Noddings, 1984, 1992; Taylor, 1991). For Taylor, authenticity encompasses notions that each person is unique, has a natural moral sense of right and wrong, and the capacity to make responsible choices that show integrity between values, intentions, and actions. He reminds us that social life is fundamentally dialogic and that we are all inducted as human beings through conversations with significant others, which give profound meaning to our lives. Buckley (1996) defines responsibility as an active critical awareness of one's actions and intentions, a desire to respond, rather than control or manage, and to assume care for even long-range unpredictable consequences of our actions, especially as they affect others. The ethics of care, in Noddings' (1984) view, is a moral practice based on an affective regard for others expressed in willingness to see the best in them, show genuine interest in their experiences, and act in their best interests. Compassion, following Kingwell (2001), is defined as a leap of regard, or willingness to care about others based in the awareness that human communities depend on feeling more than reason, as we all feel pain, and share common needs for belonging and recognition. This interdependent set of values is proposed as a regulative guide *to edge towards an ideal state rather than asserting such a state will ever be fully achieved* (Kingwell, p. 50). In Park's (2001) view, participation is crucial because the social practice itself helps people to engage productively with the identified concerns. Participatory methods emphasize dialogue because it is the natural human way to share experience and information, and has the power to generate understanding of self and others by helping people articulate their perceptions, ideas, and feelings (Park, 1993, 2001). When we reflect on our values and teaching practices, it's just as important to think about how we engage, support and interact with our students, as it is to think about design of course content and learning activities to facilitate the holistic development of students (Lovat, Dally, Clement, & Toomey, 2001).

Holistic Pedagogy

From one perspective, Park (2001) distinguishes four kinds of knowledge in representational, interpretive, relational and reflective forms. In his analysis, representational or instrumental knowledge is fact-oriented, the sort of concrete evidence we use to explain cause and effect between events and outcomes. Interpretive knowledge involves understanding meaning in situated contexts, which we commonly use

to synthesize and make sense of life events. Relational knowledge is interpretive knowledge applied in human situations, involves emotion as well as intellect, can only be gained in experience with others and plays a key role in strengthening communities in its potential for respect, caring, and affective regard – which goes beyond *verstehen*, or rational grasp of others' views. Relational knowledge thrives in active, accountable community engagement and is the essential process that makes community possible in the first place. Reflective knowledge involves critical thinking and dialogue about intentions, actions and values in everyday life and is the way *we learn how the world works, what we can do, and who we are; we learn with the mind/heart* (Park, 2001). Interestingly, Park also draws attention to the connection between knowledge and power, and integrates social researcher Mary Parker Follett's (1924) elegant conception of power-with, power-over, and power-within into his framework. In Follett's view, power-within develops from the integration of personal experience, power-with depends on shared decision-making, and power-over describes coercive control of others. Park suggests that power-within corresponds with reflective knowledge, power-with corresponds with relational knowledge, and power-over corresponds with representational (or instrumental) knowledge, and that these notions of knowledge and power might be seen respectively as descriptions of confidence, connection, and competence or control.

From another perspective, in a social work application of holistic learning, Neuman-Allen and Friedman (2010) propose a conceptual model that synthesizes research on values learning with the well-known cognitive, affective, and psychomotor taxonomies, as a starting point to integrate holistic learning in the curriculum. They note the affective domain is likely the most challenging teaching area because it integrates cognition, behavior, and emotions. With many others, they also recognize that assessment of personal soft skills can be sensitive, as some may perceive it as subjective grading. However, in the human services, such as social work, education and health care, values, emotions, and relational learning are critical professional competencies, thus are core assessment areas.

PEDAGOGY OF CARE

Velasquez, West, Graham, and Osguthorpe (2013) point out that education has been criticized for focusing too much on the technical aspects of teaching and neglecting the human aspects (p. 162). When instructors prepare to teach in online and blended learning environments, they face competing demands: learning the technology tools they will use to teach; developing learning outcomes; and creating content and assignments. However, it is important that instructors focus on the human aspects of the learning journey, too, because students will take care of their emotional needs before engaging in cognitive and meta-cognitive processes (Goralnik, Millenbah, Nelson, & Thorp, 2012). Paying attention to the human aspects requires reflection about "ethics of care" in the learning environment, and when we elicit discussions about the pedagogy of care, we inevitably ignite dialogue about education as a moral endeavour. Do instructors have a moral obligation to care? The answer to this question is beyond the scope of this chapter, yet, it is imperative to consider and reflect on when we examine the effects caring has on student performance. Research shows that increase in instructor-care increases students' desire to succeed, makes new learning easier, increases student success in achieving academic goals, increases student engagement, attention, and study time (Gibson, 1993; McNeil, 1988; Irmsher, 1997; Benson, Cohen, & Buskist, 2005). When did theories on the ethics of care emerge?

Noddings (1984) built on the work of Gilligan and others (Buber, 1965; Murdoch, 1970; Mayeroff, 1971; Weil, 1977) by philosophically examining the concept of care in depth and applying it to the field

of education. Thus, theories on the ethics of care in education did not emerge until the latter half of the twentieth century (Noddings, 1984), as America sought to revive moral aspects in the theory and practice of education (McClellan, 1999). The ethics of care provided an alternate approach to moral reasoning that was meant not to displace the ethics of justice ‘or to divide men and women into opposing camps (Noddings, 1984). Rather, it was meant to: show how great the chasm is that already divides the masculine and feminine in each of us and to suggest that we enter a dialogue of genuine dialectical nature in order to achieve an ultimate transcendence of the masculine and the feminine in moral matters (Noddings, 1984). Similar to Gilligan, Noddings asserted that the ethics of care, while rooted in the female perspective, is applicable to males and that both males and females alike can take the role of one-caring or cared-for (Noddings, 1984; Gilligan, 1986; Lyman, 2000; Velasquez, West, Graham, & Osguthorpe, 2013).

Russell and Loughran (2007) state that a pedagogy of teacher education is,

enmeshed in the ways in which teacher educators knowingly and purposefully create opportunities for students of teaching to see into teaching. (p. 1)

It’s about how you are able to make teaching a site of inquiry to gain a genuine appreciation of the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary for successful teaching. Such inquiry “opens teaching to questioning, probing, reflection, and critique that goes way beyond the technical” (p. 1) and is fundamental to better understanding teaching practice. Further to this, inquiry into pedagogical values helps instructors and pre-service teachers understand, reflect on, and question how teaching practice is affected and/or influenced by such values. When one examines the pedagogy of care, it becomes evident that when students perceive their instructor cares about them, they perform better (Gibson, 1993). In online and blended learning environments at the post-secondary level, one may raise the question about the potential conflict between self-directed learning, andragogy, and caring. Do adult learners need care? Based on Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs, “human beings are motivated to achieve particular needs and some needs take precedence over others” (para. 2). The need for love and belonging, i.e. friendship, intimacy, trust and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love, is ranked third on the hierarchy and follows physiological and safety needs. Maslow’s (1970) revised hierarchy of needs ranks the need for love and belonging higher than cognitive needs (McLeod, 2016). On the other hand, Maslow’s need hierarchy theory has been challenged by psychologists and researchers due to the lack of empirical evidence. Wahba and Bridwell (1976) note that,

there is no clear evidence that human needs are classified in five distinct categories, or that these categories are structured in a special hierarchy. (p. 224)

However, “there is some evidence of possibly two types of needs; deficiency and growth needs, although this categorization is not always operative” (p. 224). While Maslow’s need theory has not been proven and some studies debunk it, it has sparked research interests that deepen understanding about the affective domain. For example, Woodford (1979) notes the importance of having affective goals in teacher education programs. “The affective domain is concerned with the attitudes, feelings, interests, and values of the learned” (Woodford, p. 286). Further, Goralnik, Millenbah, Nelson, and Thorp (2012) conducted a study of emotion on learning and find that emotion impacts attention, focus, and memory (p. 415). “People experience emotional reactions to situations before they can engage events and ideas

intellectually” (p. 416). Goralnik et al. argue that emotional engagement should be a learning goal. If educators expect,

the learning environment to be both preparation for and modeled after meaningful community building, and if we want to develop engaged citizens, we need (at a minimum) to craft curriculum that makes learning personal and purposeful for students. (p. 418)

“When students learn to care about each other, the learning environment, and non-human nature” (p. 424), they begin to develop a personal environmental ethics that guide their actions out in the world (Goralnik, Millenbah, Nelson, & Thorp, 2012).

The Impact of Care on Practice

Noddings’ (1992) earlier work on pedagogy of care highlights that the role of education is to produce capable, thoughtful, amorous citizens. On the other hand, when instructors fail to care, this can lead to students feeling estranged from their instructors. Noddings (2005) states that it is not enough for instructors to claim they care but they must demonstrate it by being attentive and receptive (p. 2). The attentive instructor will provide “engrossment” or attention and the receptive instructor will assess whether or not students have received the care he/she is trying to express. Noddings suggests that caring is relational and not individualistic.

Although no individual can escape responsibility for his own actions, neither can the community that produced him escape its part in making him what he has become. (Noddings, p. 3)

Instructors must recognize that the way they treat students will affect the way students behave in the learning environment. Nodding argues that caring instructors denounce the “teacher knows best” philosophy and instead listen to their students and respond to their needs (Noddings, p. 4).

Caring relations also provide the best foundation for moral education. Teachers show students how to care, engage them in dialogue about moral life, supervise their practice in caring, and confirm them in developing their best selves. (Noddings, p. 6)

Noddings (1992) provides four key pedagogical ingredients that help instructors apply effective “ethics of care” within their teaching practice (see Table 1). Firstly, model care by using a caring disposition, inquire about who your students are beyond the context of the online or blended learning environment, and care about them as a person and fellow human being. Secondly, dialogue about care within the learning environment, be open to discussing ideas, and be open to learning from your students. Thirdly, practice care and provide opportunities within the learning environment for students to demonstrate care for each other, non-human things, and ideas. Fourthly, offer confirmation and validate students when they demonstrate care for others and ideas. Don’t focus only on development of cognitive skills but pay attention to development of the affective skills, too. According to Llewellyn and Cahoon (1965), when learning affects both cognitive and affective domains, “the learning is more encompassing” (p. 471) and includes both learning of factual content as well as the student’s positive feelings about what is learned.

Table 1. Summary of Noddings' Theory of Care

Definition: Seeing the other's reality as a possibility for one's self, or a 'displacement of interest' (Noddings, 1984, p. 14).		
		Notes
Domains	Care for self Care for intimate others Care for distant others Care for non-human beings Care for plants Care for objects and instruments Care for ideas	
Components of Care	Engrossment	Not projection, not planning, not analyzing, not empathy, but receiving someone into yourself so to see and feel with the other. A complete acceptance of the other.
	Motivational displacement	A shift that 'compels the one-caring to give primacy, even if momentarily, to the goals and needs of the cared-for' (Goldstein, 1998). It is not enough simply to respond to the cared-for; the response must be shaped by the process of 'stepping out of one's own personal frame of reference and into the other's' (Noddings, 1984). This leads to an action.
	Reciprocity	An acknowledgement of caring by the cared for.
How to Teach	Modeling	Exemplifying a caring disposition to students.
	Dialogue	Providing an open negotiation of ideas.
	Practice	Creating opportunities to practice caring with others.
	Confirmation	Acknowledging and confirming the ethical ideal of each student.

Source: As cited in Velasquez et al., (2013)

Furthermore, "when the [instructor] and students interact in a context of openness, the emotional base of each is honoured and accepted without judgement or bias" (Llewellyn & Cahoon, 1965).

How Does an Instructor Demonstrate Care?

Larsen (2015) identifies many different ways instructor-care can be demonstrated: responding to student questions and concerns (for example, using an online discussion forum to dialogue with students about their interests); building appropriate caring relationships by showing interest in students' activities, background, and getting to know them better (for example, using an introductory activity that allows students to share about themselves in social, personal, or professional settings); using office hours for quality one-on-one time to really help students; knowing students' names; using verbal and non-verbal expressions of care; using humour; and providing engaging lessons that demonstrate you put effort into planning activities (for example, providing opportunities for synchronous lessons where students can engage in real time discussions with the instructor). All of these will lead to greater student satisfaction, participation, engagement, and improved learning. To balance this argument, it is important to present ways students' perceptions of instructor-care decreases. For example, Larsen noted that large class sizes can decrease students' perceptions of care. Also, student perception of care may decrease if the academic rigour of a class increases. On the other hand, some instructors feel they show care by challenging students (Larsen, 2015).

Rubens and Vernon (2017) state that millennial learners want to be nurtured by instructors, and excellent instructors; provide intellectual challenge, provide mentorship, are caring, helpful, knowledgeable, and fair. Soto (2005) notes that within the pedagogy of care there is a caregiver and receiver. The caregiver wants to do the best for the receiver (p. 862). Further, care pedagogy presumes there is unification between the instructor and student and that the actors within the caring environment are willing to develop relationships with each other (Soto, 2005). There is also the action-based component of caring that suggests care is “concern for person and performance” (p. 865). According to Soto, caring is critical for newcomers or marginalized, for example, immigrants, Latinos and Blacks who are minorities. Soto advocates for caring strategies that will lead to students becoming effective performers in the school system (p. 872). Oliner and Oliner (1995) support this in their work and add that students are less likely to devote time to studies when they perceive the instructor doesn’t care.

Moving Forward With the Ethics of Care

“Last, most teachers will try to improve the quality of their teaching only if they believe that the university cares about teaching” (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). This is a very important point that must be articulated here. “Hence, if an institution wants its teaching to be of good quality, it must give concrete, tangible signs that teaching matters” (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). Some ways a university can demonstrate teaching is valued include; articulating a commonly accepted definition of good teaching, conducting research into teaching, supporting scholarship of teaching, application of a learning-centered approach that supports learning communities, assessing quality teaching, and recognizing and rewarding outcomes of good teaching (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). Instructors in online and blended learning environments who care about their students will want to deliver quality teaching to students. Higher education institutions that value good teaching will provide support and incentive for instructors who address cognitive, meta-cognitive, and affective skills using sound pedagogical practices that include the ethics of care.

VALUE OF DIVERSITY

The pedagogical value of diversity is important to student success in online (as well as face-to-face) learning contexts because all individuals have unique identities, yet also share a common need for recognition and belonging. In this chapter, we adopt the Royal Roads University (2017) diversity statement, because it provides an explicit statement of related educational values, as well as acknowledging an extensive range of multiple and overlapping social identities, which are noted in the Definitions section at the end of this chapter. The values statement reads:

Diversity enriches community. Royal Roads University is committed to appreciating and celebrating the diversity of students, faculty, and staff. We strive to increase understanding and acceptance of each other, thereby making us more compassionate human beings and strengthening the fabric of our communities.

Student Diversity in Digital Learning Contexts

In many Western countries, the post-secondary student body has diversified exponentially over the past generation, due to increased global population mobility, online distance learning options, and numbers of international students from around the world. In Canada, increasing numbers of high school graduates are going on to post-secondary education, and learners today reflect a rapidly widening range of age, ethnic and cultural groups, and variations in home and work contexts (Bates, 2014; 2015). With over 200 immigration-based ethnicities and home languages, English is often a second or additional language for domestic, as well as international students, and we also are enjoying a boom in the Indigenous youth population (StatCan, 2016). As Bates notes, the average age of students is also increasing, as rising tuition fees and cost of living require many to work at least part-time, and they take longer to graduate, or return as lifelong learners after graduation to keep up with evolving knowledge requirements. Learners require increased flexibility to meet these demands, thus increasingly look for blended or fully online learning options they can fit in around their work and family life (Bates, 2015). To address these issues, Bates (2014) advises:

The more we understand our students – who they are, what they want, how they live – the better placed we are to design learning environments that meets their diverse needs. (In conclusion, para 1)

The most important learner characteristics Bates (2015) points to will be very familiar to Western educators, i.e. learner prior knowledge and experience, learning goals and learning contexts. The dramatic changes we need to address are in the social and technological learning conditions. Students will be looking to educators for leadership, support, mentoring and flexibility to navigate these changes successfully.

Lessons From Intercultural Learning

All forms of human diversity are relational, fluid, multiple and contextual, therefore must be thought of in complex ways (James, 2000). While diversity is a broader category than culture alone, a brief overview of the emerging research on cultural aspects of online learning is provided to shed light on key pedagogies and practices that can help educators respond effectively across various dimensions of diversity. First, the literature reflects a consensus that participatory constructivism — as expressed in the “engaged pedagogies” (Smith & O’Connell, 2015), supports learning in culturally diverse groups by valuing both individual experience and multiple perspectives (Battiste, 2002; Gunawardena, Wilson & Knolla, 2003; Gunawardena, 2014; Thompson & Cuseo, 2012). These researchers recommend support for relational learning, explicit valuing of diversity, and variety and choice in learning methods, materials and activities to meet diverse learning preferences, strengths, and challenges. Thompson and Cuseo (2012) advise that effective intercultural learning requires direct experience of differences in supportive contexts to enable development of cultural awareness, appreciation of difference, empathy and communication skills. They propose culturally competent facilitation includes modelling value for diversity and intercultural learning competencies, intentional group work, guided self and peer assessment, and assuring equal participation opportunities. Appropriate participant preparation is also recognized as a key support for learning in culturally diverse groups to prevent reinforcing stereotypes and biases (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 1993; Sindanus, 2008 as cited in Garson, 2013). In a recent action research study, Reid and Garson (2014) report that instructor explicit valuing of diversity, awareness-raising of

diverse communication patterns and team expectations before forming intentionally diverse groups, and providing guided team charter, as well as self and peer assessment supports, resulted in a strong positive shift in attitudes about learning in multicultural groups for two-thirds of the 70 undergraduate participants.

One caution when working across cultural borders is that common constructivist expectations, such as critical debate, don't always translate well across cultures (Gunawardena, Wilson, & Nolla, 2003; Gunawardena 2014). From a learning design perspective, once again variety in learning activities, such as the use of alternative discourse genres, informal and formal forums, and audio-visual media to add social context, is recommended to support diverse learner comfort needs, yet also challenge them to develop interpersonal communication capacities that will help them function in a global society. From a social perspective, the platinum rule has now replaced the old golden rule as a guide for interaction with diverse others. The platinum rule, attributed to philosopher Karl Popper, and now widely applied in intercultural learning situations, encourages people to *do unto others, wherever possible, as they would be done by* rather than as you would wish to be treated yourself (Wikipedia, 2017, Responses to criticisms, para 4).

Pedagogical Value of Diversity

Increasing learner diversity is a reality in today's connected and mobile global society. In the ecological world, diversity of species is recognized as necessary to survival and balance of the whole. In the human world, diversity of identities, talents, strengths, and skills is just as necessary to survival and balance in social communities. Further, diversity of perspectives is critical to balance, creativity and innovation in learning communities. On the other hand, the breadth, depth, and rate of ongoing social and technological change exemplify one of those complex shared problems we discussed earlier. Stress and conflict are inevitable, given the real world circumstances. It is widely recognized that rapid social, technological, and economic change often results in complex, often unpredictable forms of social problems and conflict in both local and global contexts. In plural societies, particularly those in the midst of other significant changes in addition to demographic shifts, respectful open dialogue about differences to negotiate a balance of interests, is critical to civil dialogue. Successful negotiation of social change requires awareness of one's own and "other" values, as well as strong interpersonal communication skills to develop positive relationships with other community members. Key relational skills include the abilities to genuinely listen, empathize with others' experience of pain, and significantly, to be willing to share decision-making power.

In turn, developing strong social relationships requires explicit commitment to personal respect and social responsibility, together with a clear-eyed understanding that honouring these values through good and bad times (Park, 2001) depends on accepting others. Genuine acceptance of others includes respecting differences as well as similarities, and willingness to negotiate diverse differences as a natural part of a flourishing social process. Many people have difficulty in communicating about even small interpersonal differences, and even greater difficulty in sustaining positive relationships when in conflict. Some of the social problems we share in plural societies, such as competing, or even opposing, needs and values, are much deeper challenges. Thus, we need to create an educational culture that supports life-long learning in how to communicate and negotiate conflict effectively across diverse differences and problems. Education, as learning, is the most appropriate avenue to generate positive social change through respectful, critical discourse about diverse perspectives, needs, and goals. The very process of learning itself requires the ability to negotiate internal conflict inherent in integrating new knowledge

(Taylor, 1987 as cited in Mackeracher, 2004). The more difficult the learning task, or more profound the perspective change required, the greater the need for the ability to negotiate conflict. Relationships based on mutual trust and respect are essential to success. Dialogue in the form of critical discourse and day-to-day conversation are key processes that make relationship building and problem-solving possible. The relational worldview of PR, pedagogical values for care, community, diversity and justice, and the ethos of action for social change are critical supports to maintain democratic ideals in education.

Moving Forward With Value of Diversity

To provide effective learning supports for students in rapidly changing learning spaces, educators also need effective supports from their post-secondary institutions. Building online communities that can provide the safe, caring environments needed to support open, authentic dialogue across multiple difference borders is a complex project that depends on creative thought, consultation with diverse other educators, and sustained effort. Fortunately, there is a rich body of research literature to guide us in reflective practice. However, time is one resource that always seems to be in short supply in post-secondary learning environments. Provision of key faculty development supports such as micro-courses in focal learning areas and resources to develop community of practice initiatives can help make the necessary time commitments manageable. Helpful micro-courses might address online community building, responsive facilitation, moderating online discourse, intercultural learning, and reflective practice – and/or other locally identified relevant practice areas. Educators can also incorporate learning-centered practices, like shared leadership that invites students to contribute to teaching presence, and using collegial open educational resources, thereby increase learning potential, while simultaneously reducing individual workload.

VALUE OF LEARNING COMMUNITY

Supporting pedagogical values of diversity and care in higher education requires an examination of learning community. As educators, we have become aware that pedagogical values are imparted through the student's involvement in a learning community. The classroom has long been a traditional community of participants, and the health of this community affects the success of the learners (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). The values dimension that underpins good pedagogy (Lovat, Dally, Clement, & Toomey, 2011) is tied to this positive space for learning, and the “space” is more than just a room that a class is held in. More so, in online and blended education, classes are seldom conducted in traditional rooms, but in an online environment meant to stimulate the creation of a healthy classroom community. Lovat et al. (2011) refer to this as ambience, an implicit dimension of values pedagogy. Further, they propose that ambience is built upon four qualities: sense of calm, positive relationships, service and social engagement, and safety.

It is worth noting that these four descriptors of ambience lead to an effective learning community, yet none of them apply to the cognitive domain. Thus, an exploration into the implicit features of community that foster learning, are not the learning in itself. The Community of Inquiry (CoI) model as proposed by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (1999) specifically diagrams three core elements of an effective learning community: teaching presence, cognitive presence, and social presence. Social presence, as the third side of the triangle, is no less important than the teaching and learning sides. There continues to be a shift

in the philosophy of teaching from an objective imparting of knowledge to a constructivist co-creation of learning. Instructors are encouraged to lecture less, facilitate more. As one rejects the view that the locus of knowledge resides in the individual, we move to a state where *learning and understanding are inherently social* (Palincsar, 1998).

If learners do not “receive” knowledge through direct encoding of objective reality or through its transmission from a more knowing instructor, but rather co-create understanding with the assistance of instructors... then it makes sense to facilitate this co-construction of knowledge through the design of the learning environment. (Shea, 2006)

In their studies into fully online learning communities (FOLC), Blayone, vanOostveen, Barber, DiGiuseppe, and Childs (2017) propose a model where the teaching presence of the CoI is subsumed into both the social and cognitive presences. This has the effect of balancing the social and the cognitive inside the digital learning community, placing much more emphasis on the community and learner empowerment than the three-sided CoI model. They further state that such empowerment allows the learner to take control of their learning and engage as a group to complete assigned tasks. This ownership of learning, therefore, requires that the activities are authentic, and can be seen by the learner as relevant (Blayone, vanOostveen, Barber, DiGiuseppe, & Childs, 2017).

Identity, Diversity, and Freedom

Students come to the learning environment from many avenues and backgrounds. In an online or blended teaching space, this is no less true, yet the opportunity to homogenize the learners as a group presents itself. Roll call becomes a list of names on a spreadsheet, the class list becoming points of data instead of people. Understandably, most instructors will try their best to get to know the learners, to engage with them using the tools of the digital space, but there are limits on the time and accessibility of the instructor. By grounding the learning community as both a socially constructed space as well as a space for cognitive work, the facilitator affords the learners with better opportunities for learning.

A key driver for building a values-based online community is allowing and encouraging the learner to build community belonging through presenting their real self. In articulating social presence, the CoI model “emphasizes the needs for online learners to be able to address the challenge of projecting themselves as ‘real people’” (Shea & Bidjerano, 2009). This freedom of self is encouraged by a learning community that supports individual identity and rewards authenticity. “Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about reality, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication” (Freire, 2005). This openness to risk, openness to reveal the true self, and the openness to belong are either encouraged – or stifled – through the learning community. And the instructor who “shows up for class” thinking that their sole job is to teach the material is missing out on this golden opportunity to effect change in their class. Friere (2005) states that it is not the role of the teacher to attempt to impose their view of the world upon the students, but to encourage dialogue, to realize that the learner’s view reflects their situation, reflects their own self. Any educator not aware of this trap risks reverting to the “banking model” where students are merely seen as empty vessels to be filled.

The fully online learning communities (FOLC) model (Blayone, vanOostveen, Barber, DiGiuseppe, & Childs, 2017) also supports authenticity and freedom of self, asking that learners participate in their own learning, contribute to the community, and take ownership of the process. When learners situate

themselves as part of a community, they naturally engage in the co-creation of knowledge (Blayone, vanOostveen, Barber, DiGiuseppe, & Childs, 2017). Further, this “embraces the constructivist notion that all efforts to understand ‘reality,’ including virtual reality, involve the social creation of knowledge” (p. 2). Thus, it is important that the instructor contribute to the growth of an online community that fosters a sense of authenticity and autonomy, giving freedom to all students to have their voices heard. Paradoxically, this is not done through the instructor backing off and leaving learners on their own, but through positive engagement and deliberate teaching presence.

Social Engagement

Instructor presence is important in fostering a healthy online learning community. In a class of strangers, the one point of common contact is the instructor. Like a hub at the centre of a wheel, the instructor is an instrumental support, with the opportunity to facilitate a community of care. The responsibilities required to encourage the social aspect of the learning community are varied. Aside from the formal lesson plan, the instructor reinforces the learning on a personal level, while supplementing the learning with their own knowledge, and giving positive encouragement to student knowledge acquisition (Shea, 2006). In his study, Shea surveyed over 2,300 students to gauge their sense of learning in online classes, respondents were more likely to report a stronger sense of learning community if they felt that their instructor modelled a stronger “teaching presence.” Thus, an effective learning community leader is “drawing in participants, creating an accepting climate for learning, keeping students on track, and diagnosing student misperceptions” (Shea, 2006). It is worth noting, as well, that the study showed the responsibility was not only with the instructor, but that effective instructional design and organization were also indicators of a connectedness and learning.

Social engagement also brings with it the requirement for social responsibility, and according to bell hooks (2014), empowerment and resistance. In her book *Teaching to Transgress*, hooks states that “engaged pedagogy” is more demanding because it emphasizes the student’s well-being. Teachers must actively commit to a process of “self-actualization that promotes their own well-being” so that they may teach in a way that also empowers the student (Hooks, 2014). As a keen advocate of Freire (2005), Hooks reminds us that instructors are charged with transforming curriculum to reduce systems of domination and bias, and to take the risk of making their learning community a site of resistance (p. 21). Imagine an online class environment that is constructed to give freedom and autonomy to the learners not only to self-direct their learning, but to express themselves fully in the space as self-actualized persons. With the leadership of an instructor who also embraces the challenge of self-actualization, they will be engaged through pedagogical practices that provide them with “ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply” (Hooks, 2014).

Safety and Agency

If our ideal learning community, as Hooks (2014) suggests, encourages students to be self-actualized individuals with the capacity for criticality and resistance, then we need to make sure it is a safe space for all. In fact, this correlates with a key finding from the study by Lovat, Clement, Dally, and Toomey (2011), that effective learning occurs in an environment with the ambience of not only positive relationships, but trust and a degree of calm and order. In order to support a safe space online, the instructor may wish to share the institution’s diversity statement, or something similar, if available. One of the

first tasks in a course may be to ask the students to create a class charter that they can all live up to. And certainly, the instructor should also be supporting emotional safety by modelling inclusive language and building an awareness of intersectionality into class activities when possible. Something as simple as asking learners their preferred pronouns can send a positive message about the learning environment. A benefit of making the community a safe space is to empower and give the learners agency.

Student agency and self-regulation flow from the safe online community. Giving students autonomy over their learning aligns very well with both the CoI and FOLC models. Jill Darling (2015) proposes that student agency becomes a resource that breaks through assumptions, encourages collaboration, and builds community. Further, it creates a space where agency, community, and participation become enmeshed into the class culture. Users become producers as well as participants, “creating and evaluating and critically participating in culture” (Darling, para. 10). This makes for an exciting vision of a connected, diverse, and safe online environment. However, Freire (2005) warns that freedom and autonomy won’t be accepted easily by some learners. There is an amount of trust needed, and students may be wary of running the risk of failure in the face of an instructor that holds power over them. They need freedom to seek authenticity, yet at the same time, they fear it. This is precisely why the creation of a safe space is so important. And when this safety begins to manifest, it allows for self-regulated learning to happen.

Self-regulated learning – a product of agency, empowerment, and self-actualization, has been shown in studies to be an indicator of academic performance. It mediates the links between the three sides of the CoI model: social, teaching, and cognitive presences. Because of this, learner self-regulation is compatible with learning environments where face-to-face interaction is removed, such as online and blended classes (Shea & Bidjerano, 2012). In their study, Shea and Bidjerano specifically identified self-regulation as a positive indicator of success where teaching presence may be less evident. This directly speaks to why it shows positive results for learning in online situations – where the instructor may not be as “present” as they would be in the face-to-face classroom.

Moving Forward With Learning Community

In exploring the ideal online learning community, we have discussed creating a space that supports a sense of student belonging by encouraging relationships that respect authenticity, identity, and freedom of self. Values based pedagogy also relies on a learning community that creates opportunities for social engagement and accountability but also makes space for criticality and resistance. Finally, the need for safety and self-regulation is paramount, so that the learners can engage fully, both as a community, and within the learning. Based on freedom, diversity, and individual identity, a well-structured online learning community is guided by an instructor who also models their own self-actualization, and is aware of the benefits of providing not just a cognitive presence, but also a social one.

VALUE OF JUSTICE

This section focuses on the value of justice and includes a brief discussion about Indigenous pedagogy woven into the social justice dialogue. Fundamentally, the “pedagogy” of justice places a different purpose on education. The focus becomes the needs and aspirations of the learner instead of the state, church, or

other segments of society. Further, a pedagogy concerned with justice must additionally seek to correct injustice. Freire (1993) argues a position that education must be a liberating force in the individual's life. The most important element of education is to equip the learner with the tools to contest barriers of class, prejudice, and ideology, and recreate society in a more equitable model (Glass, 2001). Freire's writing is about liberation of the oppressed, less about any specific pedagogical advice or method. Furthermore, Freire (1993) notes the concept of Praxis within an educational context, by which educators act and reflect upon that action, which informs further action (p. 16). Reflection and action are directed toward oppressive structures that need to be changed and this process becomes a vehicle for the oppressed to become mindful of their own condition and struggle for liberation. Freire's social justice pedagogy places the focus of education back onto the empowered learner (p. 17).

Characteristics of Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy has been defined as grounded in the belief that injustices persist in society and that these are reinforced by the dominant ideology. Teaching and learning focused on recognizing and combatting this "injustice" is critical pedagogy (Brookfield, 2003). In many cases, sharply focused studies of educational projects have presented the opportunity to expound or refine a key theoretical concept like critical pedagogy (Corbiere, 2000; Morcom, 2002; Simpson, 2014; McNally, 2015). Further to this, there are several characteristics of critical pedagogy.

- **Grounded in Social Justice and Equality:** These goals give direction and urgency to learning design (Kincheloe, 2004; Glass, 2001).
- **Argues that Education is Always Political:** Choices about who is educated, what is included in curriculum, and what counts as success are made within the dominant political structure (Kincheloe, 2004; Roberts, 2015).
- **Importance of Generative Themes:** Using issues with meaning for the learners, the teacher can pose problems that promote deeper thinking and dialogue (Kincheloe, 2004; Neumann, 2015).
- **Marginalized Segments of Society:** Critical pedagogy is aimed at serving those segments of society that are oppressed by the political structures and other groups (Kincheloe, 2004).
- **Positivism is a Central Tool of Critical Pedagogy:** The use of evidence to support claims, the questioning of assumptions or common beliefs is an important part of deconstructing systems of oppression (Kincheloe, 2004; Roberts, 2015).
- **Importance of Context:** The social situation where learning occurs, for instance the housing status of a post-secondary student, or the community (or lack thereof) that a student enjoys while learning, have an impact on learning (Kincheloe, 2004; Roberts, 2015).
- **Complexity Makes Binary Options Obsolete:** Social elements to be considered in designing learning, and investigated as part of learning, have never been black and white. Critical pedagogy demands that considerations of privilege, identity, etc. be examined for deeper meaning and varying degrees (often governed by context) (Kincheloe, 2004).
- **Critical Pedagogy is Transformative:** Students should benefit from learning not just in what they know, but in their attitudes towards the world and in their beliefs about how society should function (Brookfield, 2003).

Social Justice and Indigenous Pedagogy

Many projects and movements aim to achieve social justice goals by making education for Indigenous peoples more effective — incorporating or wholly transforming to Indigenous traditional and integrated concepts of epistemology, pedagogy, and curriculum. Gopinathan (2006) describes the risks of imposing non-Western pedagogies on other non-Western peoples (pp. 261-262). As the injury to Indigenous peoples in North America consistently includes the material and spiritual harms of colonization, this element is combined within or set up in contrast to social justice pedagogy. Many authors have reconnected Indigenous pedagogies to their current struggle (Shirley, 2017; McNally, 2015; Simpson, 2014), in some cases, bypassing critical pedagogy (Corbiere, 2000). Shirley (2017) describes Indigenous social justice pedagogy (ISJP) as stemming from multicultural education and critical pedagogy (p. 165). ISJP is described as having three components: decolonization, Indigenous epistemology, and nation building (Shirley, 2017).

Accompanying the concept of social justice pedagogy is the concept of decolonization pedagogy (Tuck, 2012). Decolonization is seen as a necessary pre-condition to liberating educational experiences. The dispossession of land and historical and current racial structures must be addressed as part of a program of social justice (Shirley, p. 166). Indigenous epistemology and ontology, recognized as the original and authentic system of knowing and being, must become the framework to move beyond Western learning (Shirley, 2017). Nation building is central to social justice as Indigenous peoples exist in community and integrated relationships. Strong nations are essential to developing social justice (Shirley, 2017).

Some scholars talk about decolonization pedagogy, while others talk about Indigenous social justice pedagogy; some infer that they are connected or overlapping while others argue they are mostly separate (Tuck, 2012; Simpson, 2014; MacKinlay & Barney, 2014). Decolonization in North America is wrapped up in the many power structures that shape modern life, with land as a key focus. In other places, decolonization has already devolved power to Indigenous peoples (though sometimes to one Indigenous group over others), but left them saddled with structures they had no part in creating, and that are ill-suited for moving forward (Gatimu, 2009).

Political, Embodied, Active, and Reflective Learning (PEARL)

In a direct link to contemporary social justice theories, Mackinlay and Barney (2014) describe the relationship between their transformative learning environment, Political, Embodied, Active, and Reflective Learning (PEARL), critical pedagogy, and critical race theory and decolonization (pp. 54-55). Indigenous pedagogy within the North American context has benefited from a solid and growing field of work, but insights from Africa, South-East Asia, and Australia have also complemented this field. Writing within the frame of Indigenous Australian studies, Mackinlay and Barney express their reservations of writing that is *about rather than with and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples* (p. 59). They describe their research model as inspired by previous scholars enacting a “pedagogy of the heart,” research that is conducted in collaboration with Indigenous communities and that is driven by their needs and agendas (p. 60). Mackinlay and Barney note parallels between aspects common to most Indigenous pedagogies and familiar tools like, cooperative learning, authentic learning, observation and practice — all aspects of problem based learning (PBL) (p. 62). PEARL emerged as a pedagogy based in problem based learning with a transformative education focus (p. 64). PEARL aims to examine how epistemologies and ideologies are privileged or repressed and provides learners with tools to examine how such inequalities exist

and persist (pp. 65-66). Mackinlay and Barney admit that, as Tuck and Yang (2012) argue, PEARL is not decolonizing on its own merits (Tuck & Yang, 2012). It empowers Indigenous learners but does not speak to Indigenous sovereignty or colonial issues of land.

Indigenous integration of critical pedagogy is a significant example of the degree to which the work of Freire (1993) and those that followed him have grown to encompass new paradigms of social justice (Glass, 2001). Tuck and Yang (2012) argue that social justice and other critical pedagogies are Western concepts preferring to move Indigenous peoples forward (pp. 21, 30). Simpson (2014) argues that Indigenous youth are constrained within the Western education system, that a return to a truly Indigenous education system requires that ownership and leadership be given back to traditional territories and components of the Indigenous education system must operate with interdependent relationships (pp. 10-11). For example, in Nishnaabeg philosophy, the context governs appropriate decisions and actions, for Nishnaabeg pedagogy, the context is the land (Simpson, p. 10). Simpson argues that *the land must once again become the pedagogy* (p. 14). This is because the key to maintaining Nishnaabeg philosophy is the continuing renewal of a people connected to the land. Without this cultural root, traditional teachings and philosophy risk becoming deconstructed with no more meaning to the Nishnaabeg people than the teachings of other cultural traditions. Hampton (cited in Morcom, 2002) describes five stages of Indigenous education:

1. Traditional Indigenous education that existed prior to colonization.
2. Education for self-determination conducted and managed by Indigenous peoples during the post-contact era.
3. Education designed by the colonial power to assimilate Indigenous peoples.
4. Education largely managed by Indigenous peoples but still delivered under colonial structures.
5. Indigenous education controlled by Indigenous peoples and following Indigenous philosophies, pedagogies, and curriculum.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, Corbiere (2000) describes the current state of North American Indigenous education as sitting at Stage Four (p. 115). Sixteen years later, the Indigenizing Education background paper for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in Canada presented numerous examples of initiatives at Stage Four, with a few slight nods to Stage Five (Archibald & Hare, 2016).

Moving Forward With the Value of Justice

Educators in online and blended learning environments in higher education must be open to non-Western ontologies and epistemologies. Hoffman (2013) argues that the Academy must accept “Aboriginal knowing” and;

we must acknowledge that the spiritual and emotional aspects of human beings are of equal importance to their physical and mental natures. We must also be willing to understand that the spiritual and emotional domains are ways in which individuals come to know. (p. 193)

Palahicky (2017) argues that inclusive education recognizes that learners have academic, cultural, linguistic, and spiritual needs (p. 21). Adopting pedagogies of care, diversity, community, and justice

produces a safe, collaborative, rich learning environment that aides in the holistic development of students and is embedded in foundations of mutual respect.

PEDAGOGICAL VALUES SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter examines four essential pedagogical values that enhance student success; ethics of care, diversity, community, and justice. Good pedagogy possesses an inherent values dimension (Lovat, Dally, Clement, & Toomey, 2011) that outlines the educator's intentions and nurtures a positive space for learning. As stated in the Introduction of this chapter, broad knowledge about values serves as the foundation to a democratic educational experience (Heasley, 2015) and values always imply personal choice (Gudmundsdottir, n.d.).

According to Noddings (2005), when educators set time aside to reflect on pedagogical values, they are more effective and they create a safe learning environment that provides nourishment to all participants (instructor and students). An instructor who enters the learning environment without "intention" and without awareness of pedagogical values creates a recipe for disaster. Further, an instructor who enters with "questionable" values, can damage students and foster adverse views about education, for example, the instructor who brings values about race superiority, power, and control. We agree with Lovat et al. (2011):

Without explicit and implicit attention to values, the best laid plans of instrumentalist pedagogy will fail to engage the learner and [in particular] the learner weighed down by disability or disadvantage. (p. 18)

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Affective Domain: One of the three domains of learning identified in Bloom's taxonomy that focuses on how human beings deal with their learning on an emotional level. This includes feelings, appreciation, attitudes, values, and motivations for and of the learned.

Blended Learning Environments: Includes a combination of face-to-face classes with asynchronous and/or synchronous internet-based classes in higher education using a variety of educational technologies for communication, collaboration, and student engagement.

Cognitive Domain: One of the three domains of learning identified in Bloom's taxonomy that focuses on how human beings acquire knowledge. This domain includes learning information, developing thinking, and knowledge-based skills, as well as memory and analytic processes.

Community of Inquiry (CoI): A theoretical framework that situates learning within a group of learners and is based upon the premise that learning is inherently social, and that learning is supported through three distinct presences: social, teaching, and cognitive.

Critical Pedagogy: Teaching and learning designed to enable learners, particularly members of oppressed or marginalized groups, to combat social injustice and prejudice.

Decolonization: Efforts to remove the punitive structures placed by a colonial power over Indigenous peoples and to mitigate the ill effects produced by these structures.

Learning Environment: A construct that defines the learning space occupied by the students. This does not necessarily mean a physical space, but could also mean a virtual or online space.

Online Learning Environments: Includes both asynchronous and synchronous internet-based higher education programs using a variety of educational technologies for communication, collaboration, and student engagement.

Pedagogy of Care: Method and practice of teaching where the instructor takes the role of care-giver and student takes the role of care-receiver. Caring is relational and includes concern for person and performance.

Social Presence: As a component of both the CoI model and the fully online learning community (FOLC) model, social presence is the socially mediated, interpersonal aspect of learning. Learners interact with the course material, each other, and with the instructor through social presence.