Millennial Learners

Understanding the Educational Experience of Today’s Students

Rebecca Hix ~ January 31, 2008
“They’re the millennial generation …growing up in a time of unprecedented prosperity—and unprecedented pressures.”

~ Newsweek
Overview of Workshop

• Activity: You and Millennial Students
• PowerPoint: The Millennial Generation
• Video & Discussion: A View of Students Today
• PowerPoint: Iowa Students
• Activity: Engaging Students Using the 7 Principles of Good Practice
• Conclusion & Wrap-Up
Questions for you…

1. What impresses you most about students today? (pink)
2. What baffles you most about students today? (green)
3. Do you find that you struggle to engage students in the classroom? How so and why do you think this is? (yellow)
What is the Millennial Generation?

- Born 1982 - 2002 (approximate end)
- Children of the Baby Boomers & early Gen-Xers
- Know nothing but economic growth, technological advancement, and globalization
What has characterized their life?

- Compared to previous generations, millennials are
  - More educated
  - More numerous
  - More affluent
  - More ethnically diverse
  - Part of a “can-do” youth revolution
The class of 2000 hallmark events

1. Columbine
2. War in Kosovo
3. Oklahoma City bombing
4. Princess Diana’s death
5. Clinton impeachment trial
6. O.J. Simpson trial
7. Rodney King riots
8. Lewinsky scandal
9. Fall of Berlin Wall
10. McGwire-Sosa homer derby
What they say about themselves

- Happy, confident, special, and positive
- Team players
- Identification with parents
- Structure and supervision
- Will cause change for the better
Their educational experience

• Homework and testing
• Ambitious standards
• Pressured for achievement
• Advanced/AP classes
• Record college enrollment
Educational buzzwords for millennials

• Collaborative learning
• Back to basics
• Zero tolerance
• School accountability
• Standards of learning
How millennials learn

• Learning by doing
  – Easily bored
  – Excel when challenged

• Interaction, not isolation
  – Relationships are driving force
  – Feedback is vital
Academic integrity

• Cheating is changing
  – Cell phones and text messaging
  – Websites like Wikipedia
  – Buying/selling term papers online

• Faculty oversight is vital
National Survey of Student Engagement Annual Report 2007

- Incoming 1st-year students:
  - >40% earned As in high school
  - 75% had frequent contact with parents
  - 36% had friends attending the same college
  - Expected to
    - spend more time preparing for class than any other activity
    - be more academically engaged than in high school
    - earn at least Bs
NSSE 2007, cont.

• Seniors:
  – 1 in 6 studied abroad
  – 75% had frequent contact with parents
  – 54% never participated in a community-based project as part of coursework
  – 50% didn’t write a paper/report > 10 pages;
    10% didn’t write a paper > than 5
  – ~33% worked with faculty on research
  – ~33% completed a cumulative experience
NSSE 2007, cont.

• Faculty:
  – 49% deemed participation in a LC as important or very important
  – 53% said working with faculty on research is important for students
  – 81% thought a culminating senior experience is important
  – Class time = 40% lecture, 15% group work, 12% experiential activities, 33% other activities
A View of Students Today

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCJ46vyR9o

While you’re viewing the video, think about the following questions:

• What are your reactions to the clip?

• How do you think it reflects on college experiences today?
Iowa Students

• Themes across first-year and senior students
  – Reasons for attending UI
  – Alcohol use
  – General satisfaction with UI
  – Interactions with faculty and staff
  – Quality of instruction
  – Peer interactions
  – Academic challenge
  – “You’re on your own”
So how do we engage them?

Pair up with others around the table, and using the “7 Principles of Good Practice” brainstorm ways to engage millennial students.