

# i-Care<sup>©2009</sup>

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## **Invest. Connect. Actualize. Reflect. Empower.**

- A. INVEST: coursework has to be relevant. Students have to see the connection between themselves, what they are learning and their larger world, whether personally or professionally
1. Journaling – self reflection, opportunity to see growth across course
  2. Self-assessment – North Carolina’s online learning style inventory, leadership styles, ethical frame of reference
  3. Student as teachers – e.g. chapter experts
  4. Mentors - opportunity to meet people who could further their careers or teach them something they deem important to learn, or both
  5. Service Learning – opportunity to demonstrate skill, learn new stuff, put something on the resume, explore new venues
  6. Portfolio building – opportunity to create visual representation of their best work for future use
  7. Case studies – using local or pressing current national events
- B. CONNECT: the single most important corollary for student online learning satisfaction is collaboration, whether a course is a more traditional “learning delivery system” or a newer model “information construction system.” Deepen the classroom experience by creating outside connections too.
1. Know each other – connect personally:
    - a. Visual or audio introductions
    - b. Profiles that include photographs and questions each answers
    - c. Personal experience exercises, e.g. “2 truths & a lie”
    - d. Cohorts –groups that start and finish together, and their relationship and opportunities for reflection deepen over time
  2. Collaborate :
    - a. Team projects
    - b. Book groups
    - c. Wikis
    - d. Role playing
    - e. Negotiations
    - f. Peer reviews
  3. External connections

- a. Mentors - opportunity to meet people who could further their careers or teach them something they deem important to learn, or both
- b. Community Lab – external research opportunity
- c. Service Learning – opportunity to engage, collaborate in external environment, outside the class; resume builder

C. ACTUALIZE: ability to practice skills or actually transfer them into a real world setting; to get feet wet

- 1. Role plays and simulations
  - a. Negotiations
  - b. Problem-solving scenarios/case studies
- 2. Service Learning – opportunity to engage in external environment, try new skills
- 3. Community labs – opportunity to check learned theory against real world environment
- 4. Interviews – individuals in the community who have lived the discipline

D. REFLECT: we now know that meta-cognition is a necessary component for advanced thinking ability; that we have to think about what we are learning, our own biases, how the new information fits and doesn't fit with older experiences and understandings.

- 1. Journaling is an opportunity to reflect
- 2. Guided group or individual debriefing after any other experience
- 3. Peer evaluation of portfolios, projects, papers, whatever – gives students critical thinking opportunities
- 4. Blogging (guided so it's more than just a report, but also a reflection)
- 5. Discussion opportunities to share differing perspectives
- 6. Mentoring opportunities – where mentors can give feedback and talk through project work.

E. EMPOWER: This is my word for take-aways... whether it's physical product like a portfolio that they can share with future employers, or an experience they can put on a resume, or something more ephemeral, like a relationship with a mentor or a local firm.

- 1. Portfolio building – useful for employment or grad student applications
- 2. Webpage or blog – a lasting, widely viewable edifice to learning
- 3. Mentors - opportunity to meet people who could further their careers or teach them something they deem important to learn, or both
- 4. Community Lab – external research opportunity
- 5. Service Learning – opportunity to engage, work in external environment, outside the class; resume builder