

Faculty Showcase '06

Sponsored by Academic Technology at Simmons College



Alice Sapienza

School for Health Studies

Goals

- Provide faculty and students with experience in developing cross-content competencies
- Increase students' strategic orientation towards healthcare issues and problems
- Use faculty and student web-enabled journaling as experimental venue for learner-centered teaching and learning

Project Overview

In 2005, the Health Care Administration (HCA) program received a grant from the National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL), to implement their model of leadership competencies in our curriculum. Five of these competencies were not readily identified with any one course or discipline ("cross-content" competencies): accountability, achievement orientation, communication skills, impact and influence, and self-confidence.

Based on a self-study of pedagogy and learner-centered approaches relevant to the latter competencies, I decided to experiment with journaling — both my students and I — using WebCT intensively in a face-to-face course (HCA 530).

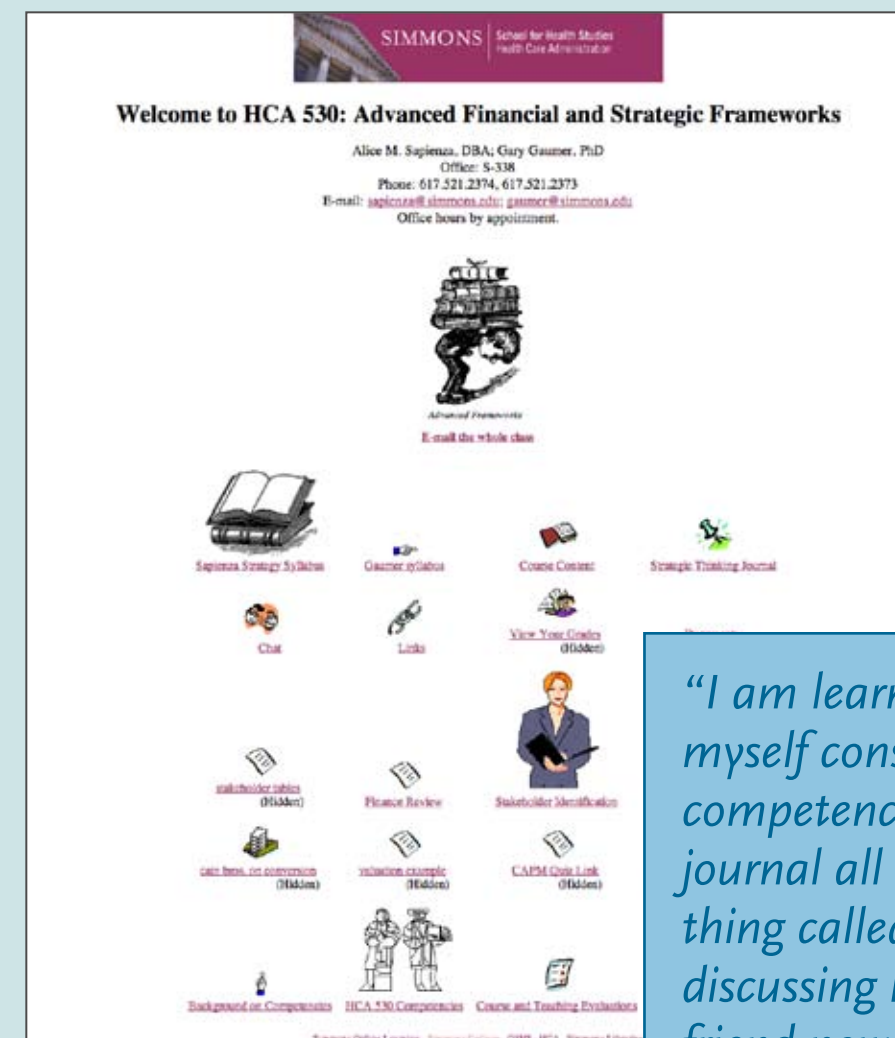
My experiment involved:

- Setting online journaling as 40% of the total course grade;
- Allowing students to determine the criteria for journal evaluation;
- Providing a venue for not only self-assessment but also peer assessment;
- Modeling "good journaling" by an open Alice Journal forum in which I reflect on my own teaching and observed outcomes; and
- Taking a coaching role in my interaction with students in their online journal.

Using WebCT as a Medium for Competency Journaling

Applications Beyond

Journaling is a familiar tool for developing habits of reflection and self-assessment. My experience to date shows that it is also useful in the development of cross-content competencies relevant to the professions. Although a very challenging and demanding approach, I believe that using WebCT as a medium for "competency journaling" has contributed to my teaching effectiveness and students' development of lifelong learning habits so critical to all the professions with which Simmons is concerned.



"I am learning a lot and can't help but find myself constantly thinking about leadership, competencies, growth.... If only I could journal all day and was not hindered by that thing called work. I actually now find myself discussing leadership and job growth with a friend now more frequently."

"The CEO knows my name!! I introduced myself today and played the 'student card.' I explained this course and my idea for organizational strategy. At first, I think he was curious as to why I brought it up. However, we actually began to have a rudimentary discussion about the hospital, its history, and strategic plans for future growth. ... All in all, I felt elated to have some impact and a little influence on the CEO's thought process."

— Simmons Students