Plan for a SoTL Project

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| **Research Question**  What are you curious about?  What would you like to know about strategies that might hinder and/or help students to  learn, in your course?  Do you want to know if an activity, assignment, or teaching strategy “works?”  Do you have a question about how to help your students learn a particular skill?  I’m curious to know if getting students to reflect on feedback given to a paragraph writing assignment (by completing a feedback reflection activity) can help them do better in a related future assignment.  **Research Question:** How does reflecting on written feedback improve students’ future performance in paragraph writing assignments? |
| **Identify a challenge/outcome related to learning that is related to your question.**  Describe the learning in a way that suggests how you might measure it using either  qualitative or quantitative methods.**Quantitative Method:** I would measure the grade outcome of a paragraph writing assignment completed after a feedback reflection activity against the grade outcome of an earlier paragraph assignment on which the feedback was given. I would go further by calculating the mean grade difference and comparing it to the mean grade difference of the same assignments from a previous term in which a feedback reflection activity was not used.  **Qualitative Method:** I would get students’ perspectives on the usefulness of the feedback reflection activity in helping them improve their paragraph writing. |
| **Describe the instructional activity, assignment, or teaching strategy that will promote student learning on the outcome you identified.**  SoTL projects might investigate the impact of a *modification* to an existing strategy or assignment. Describe how the new approach differs from the old approach and why this modification might change student learning on this outcome.  In my course, not all students read or follow up on their paragraph writing assignment feedback, so they tend to make the same mistakes when they write another paragraph in their midterm exam. By incorporating a feedback reflection activity in the course as an assignment, students are required to interact with the given feedback. This activity may help them understand what was achieved and lacking in their paragraphs. This way, they would be more aware of what they must pay attention to when writing their midterm paragraph. |
| **Describe the evidence that would persuade an external audience that the new or modified teaching strategy improves student learning on the targeted learning outcome.**  Describe the evidence you would need to collect to answer questions about the impact or value of this teaching strategy. How would you convince others that this approach is better than other approaches? What comparisons should you make? Examine students’ skills before and after the assignment? Compare students who complete the learning activity to another group of students – what comparisons would be meaningful?  **Quantitative Evidence**   * Current term: Compare grades from a paragraph writing assignment with grades from midterm paragraph writing (post-feedback reflection activity) 🡪 Calculate the mean grade difference. * Previous term (no feedback reflection activity): Calculate the mean grade difference between the paragraph writing assignment grades and midterm paragraph writing grades. * Compare the two mean grade differences and do a paired t-test to test significance.   **Qualitative Evidence**  Have students fill out an anonymous questionnaire, after completing their midterm paragraph writing, to find out if the feedback reflection activity has helped them in the midterm paragraph writing and how it has (or has not) helped. |
| **How and where would you publish, present, or disseminate this work?**  I would share my research findings (in a PPT presentation) with my colleagues and course leader and ask them for feedback. If my SoTL project significantly improves students’ performance post-feedback reflection, I would write a paper and send it to a scholarly journal. |
| **Considerations of Ethical Concerns**   * Since the feedback reflection activity is incorporated into the course as an assignment, consent for participation is unnecessary. * To ensure confidentiality, the questionnaire is anonymized so the students cannot be identified. Similarly, the collection of grades from the LMS will not include the student identities either. |

Adapted from: C. J. Stanny, E. M. El-Sheikh, & H-M. Chung (2009) ***Getting Started with a SoTL Project***

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