A Model for Teaching to Hope and Change

1. **Visioning**

Invite students to brainstorm an ideal world relevant to the course theme.

1. **Overview of the Issue**

Present the “hard” facts and data.

1. **Exposure to Diverse Perspectives**

Share diverse and even contradictory perspectives on the issue you are exploring.

1. **Disequilibrium**

Debate the issue from multiple perspectives by inviting students to “try on” a perspective they wouldn’t normally endorse.

1. **Illuminating Hopeful Responses**

Expose students to past and current examples of hope and change.

1. **Student Agency**

Ask students to consider “How might my life respond to this issue?

*Developed by the 2015 Fall Capstone Workshop Planning Team*

*Portland State University – University Studies*

“Teaching to Hope and Change”

**Sample Activities**

Please feel free to add your own ideas as you dialogue with colleagues.

**Visioning**

* Kristin Teigen’s Visioning Activity

**Overview of Issue**

* Chalk Talk: Group issue mapping on whiteboard guided by questions such as “What do we know about this issue? What questions do we have?”
* Well researched reports/articles
* Community Partner Site Visit
* Guest Speakers
* Documentary Films
* Immersion experiences – I.e. Visit to a school, site of a clear cut, shelter

**Exposure to Diverse Perspectives**

* Readings from multiple perspectives
* Attending a public hearing to hear diverse perspectives being shared
* Guest speaker panels
* Deep listening activities to illuminate students’ perspectives

**Disequilibrium**

* Take a Stand activity
* Fish bowl activity
* *Structured Controversy Role Play* where diverse players dialogue with each other in a “mocktail” party setting. This works best when you give them a question to discuss and encourage them to look for common ground and divergent thinking.
* *Mock public Hearing* in which two students serve as moderators and other students randomly choose a stake holder group to represent in the hearing. The moderators determine the “winners” based on the strength of their testimony. A “rebuttal” period in which groups can ask questions of each other should be included.
* *Anonymous reflective writing activity* in which you ask students if you can project snippets from reflective writing that demonstrate the variety of perspectives in the room. No names are attached to the excerpts and students are invited to share their responses to the ideas shared in a group dialogue or fish bowl format.
* *Devil’s Advocate activity* in which (one person or a small group of students is appointed to serve as the devil’s advocate during a class discussion about a contentious issue.

**Illuminating Hopeful Responses**

* Student teach-ins in which small groups research and then highlight hopeful and creative responses to the issue.
* Revisit the students original vision (step one in the model) and show them ways that community partners or other organizations are already enacting the vision.
* Visits to local agencies/groups responding to the issue
* Group service activities in which the class has an opportunity to act on the issue.
* Inspiring films/you tubes/articles.

**Student Agency**

* Group service activities in which the class has an opportunity to act on the issue.
* Develop a final reflection based on David Osborn’s “Continuum of Social Change” page in the “Resource Guide for Continuing Engagement in Social Change” handbook. (Copies available at the UNST front desk.)
* Develop an activity using the “Integrating Civic Responsibility into the Curriculum” guide in the Capstone Library. This guide is full of practical ideas for educators and can be accessed online at: http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/horizons/Documents/cr\_guide\_2nd.pdf
* Assign a final reflective writing prompt that helps students connect their own life to the issue you are exploring. For example:

*“How does your chosen career path relate to the issue we have been exploring? What could you do as a political scientist, teacher, artist, or engineer to make a positive impact on this issue?”*