Introductions

STEPHEN C. EHRMANN
GW TEACHING DAY, FALL 2011
Me

- Ph.D. in management and higher education
- Director of Educational Research and Assistance at The Evergreen State College
- 7 years as FIPSE program officer
- 12 years as Annenberg/CPB sr. program officer
- 1 year with American Association for Higher Education
- 12 years as Vice President of non-profit working with universities on teaching, learning, and technology
Charge from the Provost

- Help faculty improve learning
- Work with faculty to improve the climate and context for excellence in teaching
Four Stacks of Essays: Compare Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay at the Beginning of the Term</th>
<th>On Campus</th>
<th>Online</th>
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<td>Average grade</td>
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Roxanne Hiltz study of a composition course taught at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in the 1980s
Lesson

- As instructors, it’s difficult for us to see what we’re accomplishing
- “I didn’t learn it in one course – I don’t think I could have - but after four years it gradually sank in.”
2. How do excellent teachers think?

- “Excellent” – faculty widely regarded by colleagues, students and administrators as superlative teachers
- “Normal” – faculty not typically named as superlative by colleagues, students and administrators
- How do excellent faculty think differently about teaching?
### Two Visions of Teaching

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<th>Excellent Faculty</th>
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<td>It’s my job to explain the material and test fairly. It’s the student’s job to learn.</td>
<td>All students in my course are capable of becoming engaged and mastering the material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some students are going to do poorly but there is little or nothing that I can do about that.</td>
<td>I try things, watch to see who gets going, and then figure out how to engage even more students.</td>
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Lessons for OTL

1. Great teaching is based partly on inquiry: research
2. Faculty can work together on the teaching and on the research
   - Share ideas, insights, resources
   - Figure out whether, together, you’re helping students learn what matters most
• Speakers today are describing serious challenges facing higher education, and outlining solutions
• We’ve got a crew of faculty and staff who are here to help you if you’d like to be part of the response
Task forces on
- Improving learning in large courses
- Improving student feedback on courses and faculty
- Improving the rewards for teaching excellence
- Steps to improve the student culture of learning, including undergraduate research
Josipa Roksa

- Co-author of *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*
- Asst. Prof. of Sociology at the University of Virginia
  - To what extent does education amplify, preserve, or reduce social inequality?
  - What happens within colleges and universities and how does that shape student learning?
- University Teaching Fellow (UTF) and Mead Honored Faculty at UVA
- Fellow of the National Forum on the Future of Liberal Education.