

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

April 2014 Status — Transformative Learning Initiatives at UCO

As a result of multiple presentations by various UCO faculty, staff, and administrators as they have shared information about our Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR) initiative at conferences and workshops around the nation and internationally since early February, we have received multiple inquiries from several institutions for more information. In responding to these inquiries, I've often summarized STLR, our technology developments, our training, and so on.

It also makes sense to summarize our progress for the UCO community at this point in the life of STLR.

The preface to the summary is this: Transformative Learning (TL) and STLR have been received extremely positively wherever we present them. This includes nationally at such conferences as the Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy and the Higher Learning Commission Conference, and internationally at the International Association of University Presidents in Jamaica. Upcoming presentations include Yokohama, Japan, where President Betz will again present about STLR, and the International Consortium for Educational Development in Stockholm, Sweden, in June. In addition, TL and STLR have made a strong positive impression on the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, resulting in invitations to the Foundation's Evidence for Learning Advisory Committee and Personalized Learning Network.

Below is a genericized description of STLR pulled together from multiple responses in past months to inquiries about TL at UCO.

[Click here to view entire article](#)

Thanks for the contact! We'd be delighted to share information about our Student Transformative Learning Record initiative. The first stop might be our web site for Transformative Learning at www.uco.edu/tl. That's a good landing page for various aspects of TL at UCO, including links to our annual TL Conference (which will feature Eric Mazur of Harvard as our 2015 keynoter and pre-conference workshop presenter) and to our peer-reviewed journal, the *Journal of Transformative Learning*.

However, you'd probably be most interested in the links to info about STLR (Student Transformative Learning Record) because there are papers and PPTs there that explain the TL teaching/learning process. (And our paper on that page done for the recent Higher Learning Commission Conference won best paper about assessment of student of learning.)

But probably the best TL description from both teachers' and students' perspectives is the *Transformative Learning Guide* at <http://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/cettl/uco-transformative-learning-guide.asp>. This is a collection of the TL articles done each

month in *Transformative Teacher-Scholar* (<http://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/cettl/newsletter-archive.asp>) and laid out in a Table-of-Contents form. It functions as a sort of primer about TL: what it is, how to teach transformatively, many examples of transformative instructional practices, student perspectives about TL, how to assess TL, etc.

As we continue our roll-out of STLR, there will be a Central Six Tenet-identified assignment or activity in each class that's been designed by the instructor to connect to a TL opportunity because the instructor sees a way to, in the course of helping students reach one or more course learning objectives, "route" that assignment/activity through the Tenet. This means, for example, the existing assignment in a statistics class that might use a dataset about, say, access to potable water among residents of a certain region, could be the assignment the instructor uses to prompt student thinking about global competence. The instructor might include a reflective statement component in the assignment that offers the student the opportunity to consider some aspects of global citizenry and the haves' responsibilities to the have-nots that she may never have taken otherwise.

A great UCO example of this is the unprompted post below from a student taking a capstone course in which the instructor had students doing research about OKC low-income residents' access to healthcare. The research helped students reach course outcomes, but the activity offered students the opportunity to interact with a segment of the OKC population most students in the class had never encountered:



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post on a mobile device. The post is from Kelly Davis, posted 1 hour ago. The text of the post reads: "Had our first survey day of the semester, it was absolutely freezing, and we were in a 'rough' area of OKC but still managed to run into some of the kindest people. I was told to have a blessed day by more people in this particular area than by people in the Edmond area. A persons surroundings does not reflect what lies in their heart ❤️". The post has 23 likes and 4 comments. The interface includes a 'Write Post' button, a 'Share Photo' button, and a bottom navigation bar with icons for home, search, and other social media functions. The status bar at the top shows 'Sprint', '9:54 PM', and '100%' battery.

Unsolicited post
by student doing
this activity.

Transformative
Learning in action.



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We are in the process of providing training to UCO faculty and staff in how to “do” TL via the Tenet-routed assignment/activity, and have just completed the first cohort of training. In this first phase of on-site training, a mini-curriculum of three 50-minute sessions culminated in each faculty or Student Affairs professional having her Tenet-tagged assignment in D2L, with the TL rubrics used to assess it associated to the assignment in the Dropbox. Our TL rubrics are based on the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) VALUE Rubrics (Validated Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education). We are currently developing the online analogue for this training.

Given the current status with our Learning Management System’s (D2L’s) capabilities, students must move the TL assignment + rubrics + instructor assessment into their D2L eportfolio (we hope this will eventually happen automatically). This is the way grads leave UCO with an eportfolio they can use to select 2 or 3 assignments highlighting their achievement in Leadership or Health & Wellness or any of the other Tenets. We’re working closely with OKC-area employers on this and are also reacting to the many national surveys of employers which say employers simply can’t depend any longer on an academic transcript telling them what they need to know about graduates’ workplace-ready skills. A STLR eportfolio, however, can.

Finally, we continue to develop our student app, a tool that allows students to track their progress across levels of achievement in each of our Tenets. These levels are exposure, integration, and transformation as the top level. Future development of the app will mean students not only see their current progress, they will also see upcoming curricular and co-curricular opportunities connected to each Tenet.

Going through the slide deck at <http://www.uco.edu/central/tl/files/CHEP-2014-UCO-TL-across-Undergrad-Experience.pdf> --- our PPT from the Feb. 2014 presentation at the Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy --- will be a great way to understand the big-picture intentionality UCO is setting for itself in helping all our students achieve TL experiences during their undergraduate educations here.