Online Student Examen

Review of the Day for Online Students

This is an adaptation of the Ignatian Examen designed for online students.

Imagine you’re at home at the end of another busy week of work and online learning. You plop down in front of the TV and, instead of some lame quiz show, you are looking at yourself going through the week. Wow! So here’s a perfect opportunity to reflect on your week of learning. This Ignatian examen designed for online students will help you shift from a passive recipient of information to an actively engaged learner.

Some people like to watch the week unfold like a “movie” and then reflect on certain aspects of it. Others prefer to hit “Pause” at certain points to think about what just happened. This examen allows you the flexibility to do either.

Some questions to ask yourself.

From your perspective what were the high points in your online learning this past week?

- What were the points where you found yourself most engaged in your learning process? Why?
- Can you discern a pattern in what constitutes “high points”?
- When were you learning at your best during the week?
- Recall as many details as you can. What made it your best learning?
- Were you working alone? With others?
- Who and what brings out the best in you? Why?
- What can you do to increase the number and duration of these high points?

How about the “low points” of the week? What were the points when you were least engaged in your learning? Again, look for reasons and patterns.

- What would you do differently if you were given the chance for a “reset”? 
- How can you decrease the likelihood of repeating the same kinds of low points going forward?
- When did you struggle to stay focused and engaged?
- What were you doing at this point that challenged your focus?
- Was this an isolated incident, or is this something you deal with often?
- How hectic was the week?
- Do you prefer to be busy and on-the-go all the time, or would you rather have more time to pause and reflect? Why?

Are you making time to reflect on your learning? Recall the Ignatian Pedagogical Principle:

- Context: In what ways are you linking your learning to what is going on in the world and your larger life?
- Experience: In what ways are you contributing your know-how to engage and deepen the course discussion?
- Action: How are you taking your course learning and applying it to your life?
- Reflection: How are you reviewing your learning experience, thereby deepening your knowledge base?
- Evaluation: How are you critiquing your learning process and integrating your education into your life?

Think about each of your classmates and instructor. Imagine how he/she might have pictured interacting with you virtually through your online discussions.

- How did you connect positively with your classmates and instructor?
- Do you think there might be a greater disconnect between you and them?
- Are you carefully choosing your words in your discussions?
- What concrete things could you do to improve communication between you and them?
In what ways can you improve your online collaborations in order to create a more valuable discussion session?

Look toward next week.

- Are you going to make any changes in your communication style and online contributions?
- What are you going to contribute to the course in order to create a more valuable learning experience for you, your classmates and instructor?

Not only is this examen valuable to do regularly, it is also a good dynamic to integrate into your weekly class and work schedule.