



CSULB English Department

To: C. Cleveland
From: Alexander Hoffman
Subject: Request for an Analysis of a Particular Teaching Method
Date: 1 March, 2011

The purpose of this memo is to request responses regarding the effectiveness of using small discussion groups while teaching literature.

Summary

Small group discussions seem to be effective when teaching students to analyze literature. I would like to see how effective the rest of the Literature staff find this method of teaching. Additionally, I would like to hear any alternative suggestions that may be more effective styles of teaching.

Discussion

A recent study indicates that students in Literature classes respond positively in when they are broken up into small groups for discussions. Lecturing in Literature classes has been relatively ineffective for teaching the material, and students are unwilling to participate in large class discussions. This technique encourages students who would not normally speak to participate in discussions.

Small groups have several advantages:

- Every student is encouraged to speak.
- A smaller audience allows for more discussion.
- Students are interacting with their peers.
- Ideas can be developed and discussed in more detail.
- The group discussions can then be discussed as a class.

I want everyone to try out this method in their classes and report back on the effectiveness of the technique. If this style doesn't work, list some reasons why and mention any other methods that worked better.

Conclusion

Everyone should report back by the 21st of this month. Send me your responses in an email to emailaddress@email.com as an attachment. I will compile the responses into a report analyzing the effectiveness of teaching in small groups. Everyone will receive a copy of the report by the end of the month.