
The Daily Dig

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The Early Adopters Edition

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Breaking News from *The Onion*: Entire Office Unsure What To Do About Bawling Coworker.

“Findlay, OH- The entire office staff of Altman & Hanson Accounting remained utterly baffled as to what, if anything, should be done in response to the prominent sobbing coming from the cubicle of 36-year-old clerk, Jack Underwood, sources reported today.”

Professor Lance Frazier Talks About Good Leadership, Management & Crying At Work.



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Introduction: Professor Lance Frazier teaches management at the Heider College of Business at Creighton University. Professor Frazier believes that his industry experiences enable him to “present concepts from a theoretical perspective and then apply those concepts using ‘real-world’ examples.”

On his experiences with Yellowdig:

I liked the idea of Yellowdig and I had piloted it a bit in the Fall, so I thought it would be something that would allow me to have the students think about the content of the course, outside of the course. It was an experiment to see how it would go. I made it a part of the grade. It wasn’t a huge part of the grade, but it was enough that I hoped it would incentivize them to be engaged with the board. And I would say that half the people in the class really enjoyed it, right off the bat, and really engaged and went out and searched for articles.

The class is about Organizational Behavior so it’s about job performance, motivation, leadership and stress and things like that. So, what I required them to do was to go find an article or video, share it with us and specifically link it back to class content. They had to tie it back to job performance or motivation or organizational commitment, so they had to specifically mention what it was we talked about in class and then highlight the article. It did require them to go out and think about the topics outside the classroom.

Like I said, half of them got really into it and they started doing it immediately. The other half were kind of the late adopters [and] didn’t engage right away so that was a bit of a challenge that I had. But with the people who did engage right away, they liked it. Overall, the response was mixed, but I was really pleased with it once people did engage— with some of the content that they shared, some interesting stuff that I hadn’t seen, and some of the interactions they had as comments with the posts.

On the Yellowdig point system:

I actually built it into my grading scale. I think I set it at 75 because it was an experiment, I was going to go with a relatively low number, just to not put too much pressure on [the students] right away. They had to earn 75 Yellowdig points to get the full participation points. I wanted them to earn at least 30 of those points by posting new pins and at least 25 points through responding to other people's pins. And then the other 20 additional points would be earned through other people liking your posts and your pins. That kind of didn't work the way I wanted it to so I broke it down and said just earn 75 [points]. .

On students using Yellowdig:

For the most part, the ones that really dove into Yellowdig are also the ones that dive into the class in general. So the really conscientious students that like to do the right things, they are the ones that come to class everyday and participate in class and they're the ones that jumped onto Yellowdig too.

I did find that I got some really good stuff [on Yellowdig] from some of the more introverted students. And I would get a lot more in-depth comments from them on Yellowdig than I do in class. I try, in the classroom, to be very inclusive but I did find that I could get more out of [the introverts] at Yellowdig than I could in class. The breakdown between who participated and who didn't was really more along the lines of the conscientious, overachieving students [jumping] right in and the ones that were not as conscientious, they were the ones that didn't jump in until the very end. I didn't see a lot of difference between the introverts and extroverts. The people who really engaged were the better students.

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Did you notice that maybe students that tended to be friends with each other participated together or commented on each other's posts more? So, maybe all the conscientious students came in as a group and participated?

I didn't see that as much. Even just going through [Yellowdig] right now, a lot of the responses I am seeing for different posts—sometimes they are the people that [the students] hung out with and sat with in class, but it does seem to be pretty well distributed. So, it doesn't seem to be that groups of people went in together and responded to each other's posts. So that distribution didn't seem to break out in my class— a little bit, that was the case, but I think for the most part people just responded to the [posts] they found really interesting and that might have been across students who may not normally interact in the class or sit next to each other or be in the same friend circles.

I think [Yellowdig] allows them to interact with people whom they might not usually interact with. My classes at Creighton are really small, it's a really small campus, so most everyone is aware of who other people are, but that's not always the case. And so, I think [Yellowdig] does open up that communication.

On the unexpected benefits of Yellowdig:

Another thing I found students do, which I think was an unexpected benefit, was I would find them bringing up an article that they read on Yellowdig in class. And so they would say: “I remember that article that Bethany posted about personality that relates to this topic too.” I did find that some of the dialogue that we had on Yellowdig enabled us to bring topics to the class and expand on them in ways we might not normally have done.

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On debates and discussions in class stemming from Yellowdig posts:

One of the things we got to talk about in my class is—we talk about emotions at work very early on and we were talking about gender differences and I'd read an article about emotions at work and the appropriateness of crying. And, of course, in this article, it was all women CEO's that they were talking to and about— whether it's appropriate to cry, if you feel an emotion then where do you cry? So some of it was the gender role part of it. It was interesting that there were no CEO men talking about the appropriateness of crying. So we talked a little bit about gender roles and gender expectations. But the crying at work came up several times, interestingly, throughout the class, even when we moved on beyond emotions. Somebody would find another article about crying at work.

And then I posted something from *The Onion* that's obviously satirical. I thought it was funny, based on our conversation. One of the things that got a lot of traction was people posting about the appropriateness of crying at work. It came up several times throughout the class. I think it started an interesting

dialogue that [the students] hadn't thought about. I think most of us think about the workplace as being a place where you're supposed to be stoic and professional and there is no place for crying. And my stance on that is that, personally, because I am a cryer in general, I think it's okay at times to show emotions and it's not necessarily a bad thing that you cry. You don't want to be *the* cryer but I don't think that it is inappropriate. How do you deal with big emotions?

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One of the things that I talk a lot about in class is: What's the appropriate response? Well, it depends. It's true. It's going to vary every time on how you respond to someone emotionally, how you motivate somebody, there's so many factors that play a role. The great leaders make [us] feel safe to make mistakes, but also recognize the emotions that people are feeling and respond to that. That's when you figure out what kind of place you work at, is when something bad happens and what kind of support that you get and how they treat you after that.

On using Yellowdig in the future:

I think in the Fall, I'm going to use it for my online MBA class. I can imagine MBA students engaging with each other and more dialogue, rather than doing it just to earn the points.

This is a good way of bringing [technology] into the classroom, but also using what [the students] know as a way to get them to think beyond the classroom. I think Yellowdig does a great job of that. In my classroom, what I've found— in my class itself, I do not allow them to bring in their laptops at all. During class they have to take notes by hand. They can't have the laptops open.

I just think that they learn better when they write it. When I ban the laptops, they see me as this guy who has a problem with technology. So, bringing Yellowdig in and saying, “This is a cool technology platform that we're going to use,” shows them I'm up to speed. Like you said, there's lots of ways to learn.

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A Conversation with Assistant Professor Stephanie Gardner: An Expert on the State of Special Education

Introduction: Assistant Professor Stephanie Gardner teaches courses in Education at Susquehanna University, including *Cognition & Classroom Learning, Introduction to Special Education & Instruction for Exceptional Children*. She was inspired by her mother to pursue a career in special education and has worked with children with disabilities in both the elementary and middle school settings.

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On her experiences with Yellowdig:

I was excited when I heard from our IT Department that there was a new discussion app called Yellowdig that was available this semester. I inquired with our IT specialists and within 15 minutes I was able to see how easy it was to use and thought that it would be something that I would definitely want to try out for this semester. This is for a special education course that both elementary and secondary education majors have to take and it's the second of two special education courses that they have to take within the program. So, I try to embed different opportunities for them to seek out current news events that are going on around the country regarding individuals with disabilities, students with special needs in schools— whether these are things related to policy or laws or just classroom practices, I leave it pretty open ended.

In past semesters, I have students present these [current events] in class and then we would have a discussion afterwards. I just wanted to try something different this semester and especially after I saw what Yellowdig looked like and how easy it was to use. I just wanted to see how it work doing them electronically throughout the week.

By Monday at midnight, [the students] had to have their discussion post up on Yellowdig. So they had to locate a piece of current news from a reliable source and post a short description of it, post a link to the news source as well and post a few discussion questions. And throughout the week, the rest of the class had to post responses to that [original post].

On the shy students in the course:

As I said, in past semesters, I actually did this activity in class. And even if the article that the person was sharing was very emotionally charged, you would still have only a handful of students who were confident enough to speak out, share their thoughts or get into a debate. But I would say 60% of the class said nothing. [Yellowdig] essentially forced them to reflect on the piece of news throughout that week and share their thoughts and let their voice be heard, and definitely more so than what they would have done in class. [Yellowdig] just opens [me] up to a bigger picture of a student and what their beliefs are, because if they are not going to be willing to share in front of the class and they are not the type of student that is comfortable with coming up and talking to [me] before or after class— this is just the kind of a platform where you can really see what they are thinking about or what their passions are or what they feel very strongly about, which is interesting.

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TED: Every Kid Needs a Champion, A Talk by Rita Pierson.

“You know, kids don’t learn from people they don’t like.”

Good Reads

In the constant quest for personalized content curation, we at Yellowdig recommend a few great reads for your academic pleasure. Enjoy!

Scientific Vision:

What Are The Odds We Are Living in A Business Simulation?, The New Yorker.

Global Economy & Business:

Where The Smart Is: The Internet of Things, The Economist.

Engineering the Future:

Brain To Brain Communication Is Closer Think You Think, Popular Mechanics.

Artistic Vision:

The Pac Man, Kill Screen

Lifestyle & Culture:

Campuses Debate Rising Demands for Comfort Animals, The New York Times Magazine.

“I feel like they purposely try to pick pieces of news that kind of hit them emotionally and I always like when they make a connection to the future: “Going into the future, I’m not going to do this” or “Going into the future, this is what I’m going to do so my students are well supported and have the best education possible.” Which, ideally, that’s what you want to see. You want to see them be more reflective of their philosophies and teaching practices”

On memorable Yellowdig moments:

My students seemed to get really fired up about any [instance] where students with special needs aren’t getting their needs met and I think there are maybe two or three articles that they chose, where students weren’t getting what was outlined in their education programs and what they were legally entitled to. And that really seems to fire up my students because they feel very passionately about the fact that students with special needs deserve the right to receive the educational services that they are entitled to and legally obligated to. It baffles them when school districts sort of scurry around the law, so it sparks some interesting comments from them.

I feel like they purposely try to pick pieces of news that kind of hit them emotionally and I always like when they make a connection to the future: “Going into the future, I’m not going to do this” or “Going into the future, this is what I’m going to do so my students are well supported and have the best education possible.” Which, ideally, that’s what you want to see. You want to see them be more reflective of their philosophies and teaching practices.

