



# Richlin's Rant

## Graduate Student Presentations

The *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*, developed by an outstanding group of higher education professors (see below for list), provide guidelines, as well, for good practice in graduate classrooms. In particular, the first three principles are vital for developing scholars.

### **1. Good Practices Encourages Student-Faculty Contact.**

Frequent student-faculty contact in and out of classes is the most important factor in student motivation and involvement. Faculty concern helps students get through rough times and keep on working. Knowing a few faculty members well enhances students' intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans.

**IN PRACTICE:** In-class discussions of reading and research enable students and faculty to develop the necessary intellectual understanding of each other. All material which students are assigned should be discussed in class with the instructor as well as other students. Classroom interchange models the types of thinking the instructor wants the students to develop with the content.

### **2. Good Practice Encourages Cooperation Among Students.**

Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking and deepen understanding.

**IN PRACTICE:** Individual reports on material are useful only to provide a basis for classroom discussion. Having students make reports on material not read by other students should not take up class time. Introduction to new material should take place outside of class so that time with students and instructor together can be used to work with the content.

### 3. Good Practice Encourages Active Learning.

Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives.

**IN PRACTICE:** Once again, discussion among graduate students and their instructor about the material they are reading is vital to their developing the scholarly ways of thinking required by each discipline.

### More about the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*

Chickering & Gamson, 1987

An impressive group of educators assembled to create the Seven Principles. It was composed of Alexander W. Austin (UCLA), Howard Bowen (Claremont Colleges), William Boyd (Johnson Foundation), Carol M. Boyer (Education Commission of the States), K. Patricia Cross (Harvard), Kenneth Eble (University of Utah), Russell Edgerton (American Association for Higher Education), Jerry Gaff (Hamline University), Henry Halsted (Johnson Foundation), Joseph Katz (State University of New York at Stony Brook), C. Robert Pace (UCLA), Marvin Peterson (University of Michigan), and Richard C. Richardson, Jr. (Arizona State University). The two-day conference was co-sponsored by the Johnson Foundation, American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), and the Education Commission of the States. The other four principles are:

4. Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback.
5. Good Practice Emphasizes Time on Task.
6. Good Practice Communicates High Expectations.
7. Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning.