

## Chris Joiner

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**From:** Tony Holland  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 28, 2012 2:17 PM  
**To:** Faculty  
**Cc:** Bill Sellers; Kathy Buntin; Shannon Thomas  
**Subject:** Professional development!

Hope all is going well as we approach mid-term (Monday)!...and hope all that are not teaching this summer are having a wonderful break!

Below is an excellent website for personal development or professional development, both of which are virtually the same for teachers. This site has some ideas that can be immediately implemented to improve student learning. The most critical issue in terms of professional development is not necessarily the amount of information available (internet has overwhelming wealth of info), but the *implementation* into the classroom setting. Commit to implementing just one active engagement activity in your classes this semester (for those who have not already). Once you see how much more enjoyable learning can be for both the student and the instructor with these activities, the less you will feel like you are having to 'force' learning into the students.

An effective and stimulating learning environment should give students something to take home and think about other than just homework, with the lowest form of stimulating learning being straight-forward lecture; unfortunately this is also by far the most used method. The one sentence which guarantees an increase in student learning and success is...."**Providing a higher degree of active engagement with relevant instruction and supportive relationships.**" The more we can relate our content to real world scenarios, as well as showing the student how this can lead to their personal success, the more effective our instruction becomes.

<http://www.planetofsuccess.com/blog/2010/how-to-get-motivated-to-study/>

The next site is a really impressive video. A technique that allows instructors to implement current events and real life scenarios into their content, is to evaluate news events/articles/videos/etc. in an attempt to assess how they could be used in the classroom to improve learning. With the ultimate objective of general academics being to train students how to think and communicate more effectively so as to produce a more productive and employable member of society, using real life scenarios increases the students' motivation and helps keep them more engaged in the learning process. It also serves to help bridge the gap between disciplines, providing a form of cross training. The question for each of you is....**How can I use this video (International Space Station orbiting video) to stimulate thinking?**

Since improving effectiveness in the classroom relies in large part on our ability to use our creativity, think of how you could incorporate this video into your particular subject matter. Consider as many related topics as possible.. *zero gravity....orbiting speed....isolation...space program...lightning strikes...highly populated areas (lighting)....aurora borealis....earth's rotation...or anything at all related to space or anything seen in the video.* This learning activity may also require further research by the student. The more this technique is practiced the more creative you will become in choosing activities that incorporate as many academic survival skills as possible (reading, writing, math, critical thinking, study skills, motivation, etc.).

To address the other most stated areas of faculty concern (communication and collaboration), your division may want to email each other with your ideas. Division Directors may want to exchange lists of ideas with each other to further stimulate collaboration and creativity. All these are just ideas that can be used to address the three most stated areas of concern by faculty on the SWOT analysis...professional development, communication, and collaboration.

[Click here: APOD: 2012 March 5 - Flying Over the Earth at Night](#)

*“The difference between comfort and effectiveness is called growth!”*

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