

# **Advancing Learning 2018**

## **Fanshawe College**

**Mathew Ryan, Thomas Jenkins and Amy Bowen**

### **Competency Based Learning**

Competency based learning provides flexibility and freedom concerning when a student learns and how quickly they progress through the content. The hope is that by taking away time constraints, students can learn at their own pace, but they can only progress once they've become competent in the subject. Students don't have, for example, a unit that lasts two weeks and an accompanying assignment to complete when they're done. In this context, one student might not have a good grasp of the concept in two weeks and only get a C on the evaluation. Whereas, another student might have a great understanding, able to get an A+ on the evaluation after spending two days with the content. The former student would have to go back and prove their competency, while the latter would be able to progress more quickly through the content. Students must prove their learning before they progress, but may immediately move-on in the course once they do.

This freedom is great but very tricky, logistically. Having a set time (one semester) and set dates for learning (classes) enables face-to-face interaction, whereas many purely competency-based courses are online. Some colleges have been playing with different models to make this online set-up work. Some are offering subscriptions: a student subscribes for a set amount of time and may complete as many courses as they can within that time. Others make students pay course by course and have pseudo-semesters with set time parameters, but the student can always re-enroll in the course the following semester and pick up where they left off, often for an additional fee.

### **Turnitin**

Turnitin works by searching the internet, databases of submitted papers, and gives an overall "originality score". This score is not always easy to understand. For example, really low scores could actually be a strong indication of plagiarism.

Ways to cheat Turnitin:

- o Students copy and paste content, then use a word/paraphrase generator
- o Students borrow previous submissions and then run the text through word/paraphrase generator
- o There are specific Turnitin defeat sites. You pay to have your paper show the score you choose. (jitterymonks.com)
- o Students put "X" (or another character) between each word and then turn the font white
- o Students submit a picture of the paper (always check file format)

Other notes: Faculty aren't supposed to run student papers through Turnitin themselves due to privacy rights. Students who opt-out have to be accommodated.

## **Pre-Arrival Course Modules for International Students**

These modules were created and are currently being used by Fanshawe Faculty.

24 quiz questions on the following areas:

- Canadian Academic Culture
- Professor Expectations
- Email Etiquette
- Capitalization
- Writing for a North American Business Audience
- Effective Summary
- Understanding Cultural Communication Differences