

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES, COMPLETE STUDENTS

Intelligence is like pornography: You know it when you encounter it (or don't). Better yet, one might talk about *intelligences*, plural: You know *them* when you see them (or don't).

How many intelligences are there? An online search reveals variability on this score, with inventories as few as three and as many as nine, each differently divvying up the intellisphere. Common to most characterizations of intelligence(s) are cognitive, emotional, and social. Beyond these, one encounters intelligences such as environmental, existential, moral, and technological. With all these intelligence flavors out there, which do — or should — get addressed in higher education?

Some might frame a conversation about unlocking students' intellectual potential with Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning in the Cognitive Domain. Learning has roots in knowing, giving succedent rise to comprehending, applying, and analyzing, followed by synthesizing and evaluating (or evaluating and creating). As useful as this taxonomy is, it tells only part of a larger story. Bloom's widely neglected sister taxonomies address development in two other domains — affective and psychomotor. A quick overview of university websites suggests cultivating

students' growth in these realms gets far less attention than fostering book smarts.

Higher ed's privileging of cognitive intelligence(s) requires neither explanation nor justification. Since the Middle Ages, making people book-smarter has been what we do: We raise the next generation of problem solvers by nurturing higher-order thinking. Yet could it be that in academia, we value the cognitive domain so highly that we occasionally undervalue — or even ignore — socio-emotional matters? Consider that colleague over whom we sometimes offer a sigh, a shrug, or an eye roll when they demonstrate a certain social ineptitude: "It's just who (s)he is." They persist. We endure. But must we?

Not necessarily. We attend to cultivating the emotional intelligence of that next generation of creative problem solvers, helping them acquire valuable engagement skills and a bit of social capital. Such efforts can be especially critical to the success of first-generation students, who can find themselves adrift in unfamiliar cultural waters.

In thinking through how institutions might work toward such goals, I find myself revisiting two familiar strategies, with a mind toward recommmitting myself to both. The first is to continue supplementing existing curricula with opportunities for experiential learning — internships, service learning, civic engagement, e.g. More systematically requiring students to apply learning through authentic doing in authentic settings can encourage the acquisition of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. The second is to situate more student learning in explicitly social contexts, such as through team-based learning. By moving our lecturing selves off center stage to embrace our facilitator selves (at least occasionally), we can help students build book smarts through methods that don't just take advantage of engagement and reflection. The methods themselves can foster additional growth in both.

By remembering to complement the cognitive with the affective and the reflective, we better educate the whole student, cultivating the kinds of people smarts and critical self-awareness that surely amplify the workings of the mind.

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