

ACTION RESEARCH, IN ACTION @ Northwest Indian College (NWIC,2011)

**Establishing Academic Foundations
At The
Developmental Education Level**

Proposal

**The Teaching And Learning Issue Or Outcome That
I Had Hoped To Improve And Why:**

As an instructor at the developmental education level, it becomes apparent rather quickly that students are beginning their academic careers at a deficit. They fall into multiple categories that in effect, often serve to ensure not only their lack of academic preparedness but also their individual potential to see the benefits of academic success early on in their academic careers.

Proposal Continued

Tribal College Student Categories:

- ▣ High School Dropouts - or – Push-outs
- ▣ First Generation College Students
- ▣ First Year College Students
- ▣ Non-Traditional Students
- ▣ College Stop-outs
- ▣ Single parent(s)
- ▣ Etc...

Developmental Education Student

The Developmental Education level is, as I'm sure we are all aware of, where the individual student begins to build their academic Foundation. This foundation serves to ensure their academic success throughout the remainder of their college experience. It is at this level that students skills and preparedness must be assessed so that appropriate measures can be taken by both the instructor and student to begin engaging in the construction of a sound and supportive academic skills foundation.

Pedagogical Strategy

(1) Initiate a discussion regarding academic preparedness, academic resources, goal setting and ensuring success for the college student.

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY #1

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- ▣ The Northwest Indian College catalogue. (Academic Resources & Co-Curricular Activities)
- ▣ Academic Advisors As Speakers In The Classroom
- ▣ Electronic resources (Internet)

Pedagogical Strategy Continued

(2) Assign a self reflective writing
response

where they describe themselves
personally,

indicating which type of student they are

(, First

Generation, First Quarter, Non-
Traditional, etc.)

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY #2

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- ▣ Class discussion to facilitate students in determining their status as NWIC students.

Pedagogical Strategy Continued

(3) Also ask them to include:

- ▣ Their reasons for having chosen higher education and what they intend to do with their degree upon completion.
- ▣ Have them address obstacles that they see potentially preventing them from being successful during the present quarter.
- ▣ Have them also consider and address what attributes they may already possess that will contribute to their academic success.

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY #3

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

It is important at this point in the assignment to explain students.

- ▣ That the college experience is so much more than a degree to hang on the wall.
- ▣ There may be obstacles to their academic success, however, there are also ways to overcome those obstacles.
- ▣ They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to NWIC that will aid them in being academically successful.

STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY

- ▣ Pre-assessment based upon students initial reflective writing responses.
- ▣ Daily instruction
- ▣ Post-assessment based upon students responsiveness to daily instruction, writing assignments, reading assignments and final reflective writing response.

STEPS TAKEN TO MEASURE STUDENT LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT

- ▣ Compare and contrast written responses.
- ▣ Utilize Direct Measures: Weekly assignment grades, attendance, final paper grades.
- ▣ Indirect Measures: Student evaluations and daily interactions with individual students and the class as a whole.

STUDENT DATA:

Student	Degree	Final Grade	Attend:	Weekly Assign:	Final Paper	Student Attributes
A	DTA	B	41/54	9/12	90%	N/FG/G ED SO
B	DTA	F	19/54	3/12	0%	N/FG/G ED
C	NASD	F	19/54	1/12	0%	FG/HS/
D	DTA	A	51/54	12/12	95%	N/FG/G ED
E	CDS	B	49/54	10/12	90%	N/FG/G ED
F	NASD	B+	52/54	11/12	85%	N/FG/G ED SO
G	DTA	A	51 /54	12 /12	95%	FG/HS

CONCLUSION

- ▣ The research showed me the dynamic paradigms that exist not only within the tribal college environment but also at the Dev. Ed. Level.
- ▣ I was able to recall having been that Dev. Ed. Student making the experience empowering.
- ▣ I was able to share the benefit of my experience with my students, which created a unique learning environment.
- ▣ Most importantly, I believe I facilitated an understanding of the academic environment for my students, which empowered them to become more efficient students and helped them to begin building their academic skills foundations.

DISPELLING THE MYTH OF INDIAN TIME

- ▣ *As an instructor I continually struggle with my students often seeming inability to consistently attend class on time and on a regular basis. Even with my daily reemphasis upon the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in order to ensure academic success, students often fail to do so and have, on numerous occasions, albeit cynically at times, blamed the ideal referred to as 'Indian Time.' It was my intention to once again, deliberately tackle the issue of regular attendance and punctuality to ensure students academic success.*

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY

Over the course of the quarter I juxtaposed specific culturally accurate historical examples of preparedness, deliberateness and connectedness to ones environment, specifically, (Reef netting) with the students contemporary academic experience here at Northwest Indian college. By utilizing the historic example of reef netting to sustain a family throughout the winter as a task that requires preparedness, deliberateness and connectedness to ones environment, I hoped to convey to my students that it is those very same cultural attributes that

directly determine the successfulness of a Native student. It was my further hope that the research would allow students to conclude that although the resources and environments may have changed the objectives, outcomes and tools necessary to ensure success are the same as they always have been.

THE REEF-NET

REEF NET

① SINGLE REEF NET—USUALLY SET JUST OFF SHORE OVER KELP COVERED REEF, IN PATH OF MIGRATING SALMON. CHANNEL IS CUT THROUGH KELP TO FUNNEL FISH TOWARD NET.

② WATCHMEN IN CANOE STERNS KEEP LOOKOUT FOR SALMON ENTERING NET. AT THE RIGHT MOMENT, WATCHMAN IN OFF-SHORE CANOE (THE CAPTAIN) SIGNALS CREW TO RAISE NET

③ WHEN NET SIDES ARE UP OVER GUNWALES, MAN LETS OUT SLACK ON ANCHOR LINE, ALLOWING CANOES TO SWING TOGETHER.

④ NET IS PULLED INTO INSHORE CANOE, FISH DROP INTO OFF-SHORE CANOE.

CANOES ARE ANCHORED WITH STERNS FACING TIDAL CURRENT. EACH HAS CREW OF 6 TO 12 MEN

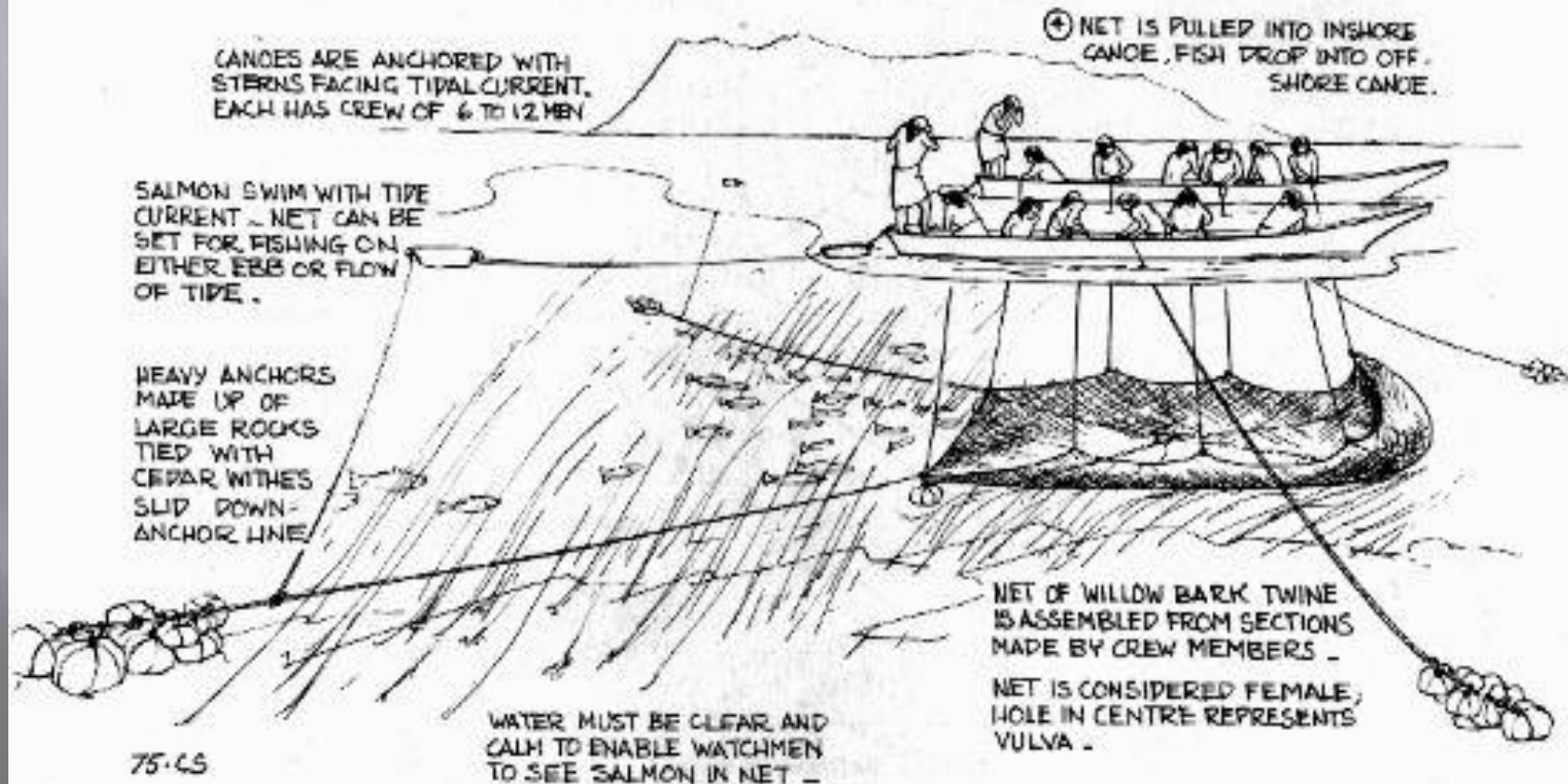
SALMON SWIM WITH TIDE CURRENT — NET CAN BE SET FOR FISHING ON EITHER EBB OR FLOW OF TIDE.

HEAVY ANCHORS MADE UP OF LARGE ROCKS TIED WITH CEDAR WITHES SLID DOWN ANCHOR LINE

NET OF WILLOW BARK TWINE IS ASSEMBLED FROM SECTIONS MADE BY CREW MEMBERS —

NET IS CONSIDERED FEMALE, HOLE IN CENTRE REPRESENTS VULVA.

WATER MUST BE CLEAR AND CALM TO ENABLE WATCHMEN TO SEE SALMON IN NET —



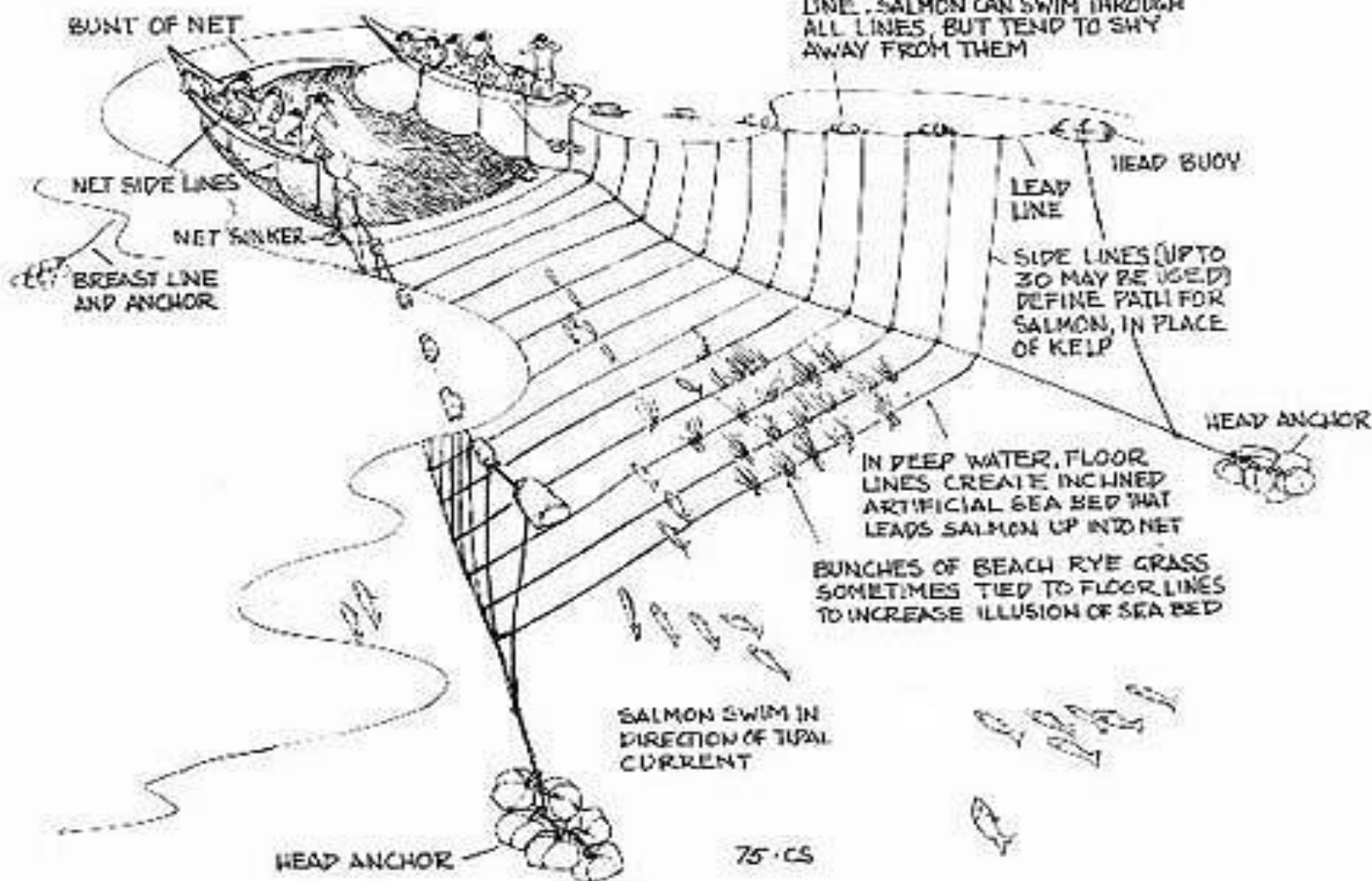
THE REEF-NET CONTINUED

You can clearly see, as is indicated by the pictures of a traditional reef-net that it must have taken a great many hours to gather the resources to complete the construction of a reef-net. Once enough resources were gathered to construct a primary net, a reserve net and ropes and mending twine, it must have taken a great many more hours for a number of people to bring the project to fruition. Then they had to spend a great deal more time fishing, which of course would be followed by food preparation for the following winter.

REEF NET, DEEP WATER

IN DEEP WATER LOCATION. WITH
NO KELP, REEF NET IS SET WITH
ADDITIONAL GEAR

WHEN SIDE LINES ADDED, EXTRA
FLOATS HELP SUPPORT LEAD
LINE. SALMON CAN SWIM THROUGH
ALL LINES, BUT TEND TO SHY
AWAY FROM THEM



Imagine gathering enough of these to construct multiple nets and several hundred feet of ropes and mending twine.



STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED

- ▣ Students were rewarded with points for punctuality, regular attendance and assignments completed on time. (points represented the hypothetical resource, stinging nettles)
- ▣ The students with the most points (resources) at the end of the quarter were compensated with Fred-Meyer gift cards they could use to feed their real-life families.

MEASURES TAKEN TO ASSESS STUDENT LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT

DIRECT MEASURES:

- ▣ Attendance
- ▣ Weekly Assignments
- ▣ Reflection papers regarding their perceptions of the researches effectiveness.

INDIRECT MEASURES:

- ▣ Periodic conversations regarding student perceptions.
- ▣ Instructor observations of students overall performance from the beginning to the end of the quarter.

STUDENT DATA:

	MID-TERM GRADE	ABSENCES	WKLY ASSGN / COMPLETED FINAL (CF)	FINAL GRADE
Student (A)	U	16/54	2/10	F
Student (B)	S	2/54	10/10 (CF)	A-
Student (C)	S	3/54	9/10 (CF)	B+
Student(D)	U	2/54	1/10	F
Student(E)	U	12/54	0/10	F
Student (F)	S	2/54	9/10 (CF)	B-
Student(G)	U	10/54	3/10	F
Student (H)	S	4/54	9/10 (CF)	B+

STUDENT DATA CONTINUED:

	MID-TERM GRADE	ABSENCES	WKLY ASSGN / COMPLETED FINAL (CF)	FINAL GRADE
Student (I)	U	5/54	2/10	F
Student (J)	S	0/54	8/10 (CF)	C
Student (K)	S	2/54	7/10 (CF)	C+
Student (L)	U	13/54	4/10	W
Student (M)	S	7/54	7/10 (CF)	C+
Student (N)	S	6/54	1/10	F
Student (O)	U	6/54	5/10 (CF)	C+
Student (P)	S	3/54	8/10 (CF)	B-
Student (Q)	U	12/54	4/10	W

STUDENTS WHO ATE THROUGH THE WINTER

- ▣ STUDENT (K) 1ST Place
- ▣ STUDENT (B) 2nd Place
- ▣ STUDENT (C) 3rd Place
- ▣ STUDENT (J) 4th Place

CONCLUSION

Although this particular action research project did not necessarily ensure a higher than normal success rate with respect to course completion, it did appear to have dramatically impacted the students who perhaps would have succeeded in the course regardless of whether or not they had been exposed to the cultural example. Most students showed up on average of fifteen minutes to a half hour early for class. They came prepared and most often with questions regarding that weeks reading or writing assignment. In short, I believe it merely improved my potential of reaching those who were underprepared and/or academically not ready for the college experience, while at the same time drastically improved the overall experience for those who would have otherwise already been invested in successfully completing the course and developing the skills necessary to ensure academic success.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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