10/10/14
TE 802

Video Assignment Self-Reflection

I asked my peers if they had any tips or tricks that I may implement in my classroom because I generally form small groups by asking half of the students to simply turn their desks around. This is a logistically responsible way to go about the group making process, but it is boring and does not grant students an opportunity to work with others. I also asked my peers to point out moments in which my teaching persona appeared to be awkward. My focus class has a homogeneous black population and I was concerned that my attempt to implement (contemporary) hip hop in the classroom would be perceived as inauthentic or pandering. For that reason, I was a bit nervous about the lesson and was concerned that the emotion may have negatively impacted my teaching persona that day. I also asked my peers if I utilized the space efficiently and if they had any tips for owning the space.

Some of my peers suggested that I assign each student an arbitrary number or to ask each student to write their names on slips of paper, for the purpose of forming groups by drawing numbers (or names) out of a hat. Another peer suggested that I simply allow students to have autonomy (within reason) and select group members on their own. My peers refused to identify a moment that they perceived as awkward, which could mean one of two things: a) my concerns were unfounded and my inner distress did not reach the surface as I feared or b) my peers are too polite and awesome to acknowledge any awkward moments. Either way is fine with me, I suppose. My peers also refused to offer suggestions relating to the ownership of classroom space. The general concensus seemed to be that I owned the classroom space well enough.

In the future, I will definitely implement one of the suggested small group distribution strategies in order to make sure student interactions are varied. However, I am concerned about deviating from the routine because the current method is extremely efficient and easy. During a lesson that occurred between the posting of the first video and the typing of this reflection, I attempted to use the notecard idea in order to form small groups and it did not go over well. Students resisted because "moving is too hard in the morning" and simply worked within small cluster groups with other students in close proximity. Ultimately I did not have a problem with that because the students did quality work that day with minimal distracting behavior, but I would like to try a strategy in the purpose that students will accept.