Evelyn Jackson
BISC 104 Course Redesign (with Tiffany Bensen and Carla Carr)
Spring Semester 2020
Reflections on Course Design Elements

The elements I used for the BISC 104 course redesign were primarily class participation assignments. Some of these were in-class activities, and others were in an online format using Blackboard's digital dropbox. The content of these assignments aligned with the course lecture material. The main challenge I encountered when developing these assignments was finding relevant resources to present to the students that would enhance the course content and encourage critical thinking. I used sources such as blogs, articles and video clips and enjoyed researching these to enhance the course redesign. I assigned weekly class participation activities, and the student response for these was positive.

After reviewing my student evaluations from this past Spring semester, some students commented that they would like to have more class participation activities, so that is something I will consider for future semesters. Due to the change in course delivery from COVID-19, the only option I had for delivery of these exercises was an online format. The course would improve further if there were more of these assignments given in-class, but it is difficult to grade in-class assignments for high enrollment lecture courses. I did give in-class activities that were not graded, and still had good student participation and engagement.

Beyond trying new assignment formats, in the future I intend to find additional ways to move beyond traditional lecture in the classroom. This is a major hurdle for the redesign of a content-heavy course such as BISC 104 and will consistently drive my direction as an instructor. An additional positive outcome of this course redesign was increased collaboration between BISC 104 instructors on the project. We had regular meetings to discuss the redesign and other topics related to pedagogy, and this will continue to strengthen the course.