

Sylvie Raquel, “Acts and the Amazing Race: Developing Academic Responsibility in a Freshman Course”

The book of Acts is an exciting book that addresses many theological and practical ecclesiastical topics. A lecture on this subject would not only annoy a large classroom of freshmen but it also would choke the amazing thrust of the story. To give justice to the narrative’s energy and impulses, I adopted a flipped classroom approach and developed a strategy that embarks students on a dynamic journey to discover the impetus, the proponents and the organization of the Christian mission. I have laid out specific steps of the journey to let students enjoy all aspects of the ride, including the individual preparation, the group organization, and the final production. My voyage takes in consideration many pedagogical questions educators have at heart: How do you make the Bible relevant? How do you teach freshmen to be engaged in personal research? How do you teach them to use research tools and other academic skills? How do you keep all students engaged at all times? How do you make them understand theological concepts without using a theological jargon? How do you teach them community responsibility and cultural engagement? How can you encourage self-reflection and expression? In this session, I will share how I have imbedded within this project an answer to all aforementioned questions.