Curricula & Assessment Design to Encourage Learning

Why going through the ‘motions’ leaves me ‘motionless’

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Philosophy of Skills Development in Business Related Courses

- **Subject Knowledge** (Organisations and their Management; People; Markets; Operations; External Environment; Communication and IT)

- **Intellectual/Practical/Transferable Skills** (ability to conduct research and analyse data; critical thinking and problem solving; effective oral and written communication; self-awareness; individual and group performance; time management)
Effective Curricula & Assessment

• How does curriculum enable learners to build, practise, develop and apply skills in a range of appropriate contexts?

• What opportunities does curriculum provide for learners to demonstrate they have secured their competences from the life-long learning perspective?

• Fit for purpose (Valid)
• Evaluates achievement of learning outcomes (Transparent)
• Reliable and Consistent
• Fair
• Efficient and Manageable
• Include effective Feedback (Perrie, 2003, p.86)

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Internationalisation, Trade and Markets Course

• UG level 5 course (aprx 150 students split in 5 tutorials)

• Course Activities and Assessment:
  - Micro-lectures / tutorials
  - Group Presentation
  - Individual Thematic Diary
  - In-class Debate
How Data was collected?

• Semi-structured Questionnaire distributed to the students during the last session (80 completed)
• Mix of Qualitative and Quantitative Data
• Tutor diary/notes on the running of the course
Diary

Diary as a learning tool (lecturer perspective)

• tools for reflection on practice eg by teachers, nurses, physiotherapists (O’Connell and Dyment, 2006; 2011)
• used in business education, eg as part of a management accounting course (Bisman, 2011)
• mode of completing diaries eg digital v. paper entries (Gleaves, Walker and Grey, 2007; 2008)

What do students think?

• identified that they had become more aware of current business and economic issues
  ‘it forces the student to apply relevant theory but also it gives insight in their practicality in the real world’
• enjoyed being able to select their own topic area
  ‘it is associated with the recent issues that you are interested in’
• engaged in active learning
  ‘I found the diary to be useful as it is a continuous process of engagement’
Debate

Debate as a learning tool (lecturer perspective)

• A structured contest of argumentation between two opposing teams defending and attacking a given proposition
• Forces the participants to consider not only the facts of a situation but the implications as well.
• Encourages the participants to think critically and strategically
• Encourages engagement and a commitment to a position.
• Require students to engage in research, master critical and oratory skills
• Provides an opportunity for peer evaluation

What do students think?

• Learned FROM others
• Mastered communication skills
  ‘more interaction opportunities with others’
  ‘I trained my reaction skills’
• Developed team working skills
  ‘I had exposure to the views of others’
  ‘I felt exciting to collaborate with others and keep the ‘winning spirit’
• Understood the need to be prepared for uncertainty
  ‘I knew I had to research ‘around’ the topic as all were working on the same issue’
Challenges

Diary
Some students found it difficult to know if they were approaching the assignment correctly
‘lecturers should provide a model’
‘lecturers should provide regular feedback so that students know that they are doing the right thing’

Debate
Some students:
• found it challenging to allocate responsibilities and asked for tutor management;
• did not feel ‘safe’ as it is impossible to prepare all the material;
• found it harder to keep the dialogue going comparing to a monologue found it difficult to speak their mind.

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Let us Debate

• Effectively designed Curricula and Assessment is about
  - enabling students to meet learning outcomes of their programme of study
  - enabling students to transfer what they have learnt at the university to other life activities
Rules of the Game:

• Be prepared to share your views
• Listen to and respect others
• Be open minded
• Support your argument with evidence
What Have we Learned?

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Questions?