“Lets Get Busy”
Active learning approaches and team teaching to support student engagement

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Abstract
This poster presentation illustrates the experiences of a teaching team applying active learning strategies in a core module on a first year course in a School of Social Sciences. It highlights both the challenges and successful solutions to these challenges that the team encountered when employing innovative approaches throughout the module. The students’ perspectives of their experiences of engagement with these techniques are also presented. The types of strategies which were utilized are outlined and examples provided. Data was gathered using questionnaires with students whilst the teaching team are engaged in a collaborative auto-ethnographic approach.

Background
- Core module “Key Theories and Concepts in Care” (KTCC) delivered to 150 students of Social Care Practice and Early Childhood Care and Education
- Innovative aspect of teaching was the delivery of the module from the perspective of operating within a multidisciplinary team and teaching the module collaboratively whilst using active learning strategies
- Teaching team: practitioners from a variety of care fields in order to add authenticity to our delivery and allow for modelling of collaborative working

Methods
- Auto-ethnographic writing s by lecturers contribute to a “collective wisdom” (Davey & Ham, 2009)
- Support sessions in an external space with an external facilitator and the conversations held as part of these meetings are also an integral aspect of the research process
- Students were required to complete online feedback questionnaire which provided quantitative and qualitative data

Active Learning Methods

Model collaborative working through team teaching
C: making this visible to students
S: The team took some lectures together and recorded and presented a sample case study, which was viewed and evaluated with students

Support student engagement
C: Diverse student cohort of two different programmes
S: Encouraging collaborative work and the development of personal learning networks
S: Apply active and creative teaching and learning approaches

Positive experience of collaboration
C: Maintain full facilitated team members
S: Use of the externally facilitated ‘thoughtful space’ to explore the systemic and dynamic nature of group/team work.
S: Clear structured approach to communication including a designated team coordinator and regular meetings which required a significant time commitment.

Feedback
- “It has been very rewarding and have gained both personally and professionally from the experience”
- “It was very useful to see the lecturers doing a mock conference”
- “Their approach to teaching!!”
- “It felt like such a safe space where we could talk about different issues.”
- “It would be the relationship with the tutors who are there to help and support you every step of the way”

Challenges & Solutions

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Results
During KTCC to what extend have you felt supported by the teaching team to settle into the module?

Please rate your experience of team teaching

Conclusions
- Our aim as a teaching team was to model collaborative working to our students. Although a large amount of collaboration was necessary when planning for, making decisions about and reflecting on the programme this was not always visible to students.
- Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive and engagement throughout the module was reported to be high.

Bibliography