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Introduction

The Learning Skills (LS) team adopts a holistic framework to enhance learning designs across disciplines. The team responds to invitations from Schools and programs to contribute to learning design enhancement in various ways and negotiates mutually beneficial collaboration. The course coordinator (Dr Susan Thomas in SASS) of the GCHE course invited the team to contribute to a research skills development component in Unit 1 of the GCHE course that was planned for July 2014.

Course requirements

The LS team who was approached to develop and facilitate a tutorial that specifically integrated the Research Skill Development (RSD) component developed by Willison and O'Regan, (2006). The two hour tutorial covered learning outcomes and RSD analysis at various levels of research in assessment tasks.

LS holistic framework and integrated design

The LS team attended several research skills development workshops to familiarise themselves with the RSD framework. In order to respond appropriately to the needs of the course coordinator and to align with the learning outcomes, the LS team engaged in the following activities in preparation:

- attended meetings with the course coordinator to identify the required or appropriate modalities of the tutorial
- prepared lesson plans on Developing Assessment Questions
- developed lesson plans to incorporate Research Skill Development (RSD) into assessment practices

Besides highlighting ways to align the RSD framework according to assessment requirements, other related activities helped students to identify assessment types and the levels of research attained by the researcher.

This approach enhanced learning design through the adoption of a holistic framework taking into account learner needs, the teacher perspectives and the various learning skills (writing, listening, reading and critical analysis) approaches.

Our response: Enhanced Tutorial Design

Part of the two hour session

- focused on a structured application of good-practice principles in the use of RSD to inform learning, teaching and assessment
- included in-class activities (writing, listening, reading and critical analysis) for the unit
- provided a practical approach for participants to explore the different levels and facets of research in mapping skill development and in analysing student autonomy in research

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Conclusion

The GCHE integrated skills design is the first model developed at Monash Malaysia. It incorporates the RSD framework concepts which are used as a foundation for discussion with other disciplines at the invitation of course coordinators.

Reference

Willison, J. and O'Regan, K. (2006), (http://www.adelaide.edu.au/rsd/framework/Dec09_RSDFramework.pdf)

Acknowledgement

The Education Innovators Forum is a variation of the World Café and The Art of Conversations that Matter event that was hosted in June 2014 by the Education Management team in the Campus Education Office to encourage inter-school/department and multidisciplinary conversations about learning and teaching at Monash University Malaysia.

Participants who attended the event agreed to form an Education Innovators team and to host the forum at the invitation of Schools and departments to facilitate ongoing dialogue about learning and teaching concerns, as required. The Education Innovators Forum Resources are developed by the discussion facilitators of various topics that were identified as critical learning and teaching concerns and dilemmas at the Forum. Each resource is designed in the form of an easy to read short information brochure on a specific topic. It can be used to facilitate discussion among colleagues and peers who hold similar interests and for use with student groups, as relevant to the learning and teaching context.

Team members are Esyin Chew (Senior Lecturer, School of Information Technology), Boon How Khoo (Lecturer, School of Engineering), Adrian Yao Yong Tat (Lecturer, School of Arts and Social Sciences), Hassan Yusuf Osman (Senior Librarian, Library and Learning Commons), Charles (Student, School of Business), PurushKaru (Learning Skills Adviser, Education Management), Regina Chan (Learning Skills Adviser, Education Management), Fadhliyah Saipul (Executive Administrator, Education Management), Kok Soon Cheang (Administrative Assistant, Quality Assurance & Compliance) and Fay Patel (Director, Education Management).

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Note: This article presents the authors perspective on the topic and may be used to generate discussion.