STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND EXPERIENCE: THE EBB AND FLOW OF EPISTEMOLOGY
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Changing teaching practice and how knowledge is shared
Abstract

- Epistemology is the study of the nature and scope of knowledge. Is it right that the flow of knowledge to our students is one way? I think not.

- On reflection of how I engage my students and disseminate knowledge I have recently revised the way I teach and begin many of my teaching sessions. The best practice I am sharing is through a change in the way I begin many of my lectures. I request students come to the following lecture prepared to lead a 10-15 min discussion on a voluntary sector organisation they have engaged with.

- This shares their knowledge that we can then all learn from.

- This approach ensures the learning and knowledge is shared with everyone, that the learning is relevant / current and that students increase their skills in presenting their own ideas.
Where did this change in teaching approach come from

◦ This came from teaching a module two years ago. The assessment was a presentation by Level 6 students.

◦ A colleague, Andre, in Childhood, Social Work and Social Care (who had taught the module previously) mentioned that he helped students prepare for this assignment by asking them to do mini presentations as the module progressed. This helped them focus their assessment presentation and improve confidence in presenting to the group.

◦ This gave me the idea of inviting students within the modules I taught to share their experience of working with a relevant voluntary sector organisation. This would be in the format of a 10-15 minute discussion. Not a presentation! ... 'discussion' sounds better.

◦ I teach within the BA (Hons) Adult Social Care, BA (Hons) Children and Families, BA (Hons) in Early Childhood and the Foundation Degree in Early Years.
The activity brief that is given out to students

Additional learning for Advocacy and Justice

Module tutor: Suzanna McGregor

Your task for next week or any of the following weeks is to prepare to lead a 10-15 minute discussion on one local or national voluntary sector organisation / charity that supports children and or adults with advocacy. An organisation that you have had experience of.

This task will help to widen your knowledge and share that knowledge with fellow students. The aim is to enable you and them to enhance your knowledge, professional development and help with the assignment for this module.

Please be prepared to be one of the people selected next week or in the coming weeks to lead a discussion on your chosen organisation.
The pros and cons

The positives

◦ Helps students develop their skills as an audience, in presenting and creates a supportive environment.
◦ Shared knowledge between all of us in the room; hence the ebb and flow of epistemology. I learn from them.
◦ It is variation of activity, basic pedagogy.
◦ Promotes a sense of ownership within the group.
◦ Starts the session in a relaxed manner.
◦ Is a change from me delivering one way knowledge.

What could go wrong ... the cons

◦ They don’t turn up the week they are supposed to present... how to mitigate this; I ask them all to be prepared for any week.
◦ They deliver incorrect material... how to mitigate; I do a general check on what they have covered afterwards.
◦ Any other disadvantages ??
In summary ...

- This is a method of teaching that changes and challenges how knowledge flows in the classroom.
- It is a variation on the theme of flipped learning / blended learning.
- I will continue to incorporate this approach, if it benefits the students.
- It works especially well with the Foundation and Top Up Degrees where students are already in the work place, or placements and are engaged with voluntary sector organisations.
- Are there any observations or thoughts?