Session Title: Promoting academic confidence and social integration through induction and programme structures

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Promoting academic confidence and social integration through induction and programme structures

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PedRIO, University of Plymouth
The effective student?

The first year experience: current practice and contemporary thinking

• How do we integrate students effectively?
• How do we promote student-student and student-academic working?

  – Who are our first years?
  – Immersive learning
  – Social integration
  – Pedagogic underpinnings
  – Inclusive assessment
Starting University
Tinto’s (1975) Model of Student Integration
But it is about more than integration...

Self-efficacy

Attribution retraining
  • Instructor modeling
  • Peer leader modeling
  • Student successes over time
  • Sense of control over learning

Underpinned by feedback
Non-traditional students

• Prior learning a major factor in student retention
  – Sense of preparedness underpins withdrawal
  – Mismatch in expectations between students and lecturers regarding skills students possess

  – Non-traditional students particularly ‘at risk’ of withdrawal (Merrill and Johnston 2011)
  – ‘look beyond rhetoric of WP’
First year success factors
(Cox & Lemon, 2016)

10 ‘success factors’ for 1st year students identified based on a review of contemporary American literature.
What do we have in the curriculum already - what’s missing – what else?

1. Extent to which students are prepared to take responsibility and control for their own learning
2. Competition
3. Task planning
4. Expectations (goal setting / career planning)
5. Family involvement
6. College involvement with the HEI
7. Time management
8. Wellness
9. Precision (personality type)
10. Persistence
First year success factors
Importance of Induction

• Crucial timeframe:
  – Positive sense of self efficacy
  – Form connections to academic, disciplinary and social communities
  – Develop awareness of ‘university-level study’

• Extended / activity-based inductions (e.g. Gaskin & Hall, 2002; Edward & Middleton, 2002)

• Benefit to all students, not just WP (Thomas, 2012)
University of Plymouth

- 93.9% of the student body come from state schools;
- 29.7% of 1st years from low socio-economic backgrounds
- 12.6% of FT undergraduate population have a declared disability, sector benchmark of 5.8%.
Curriculum Enrichment Project (CEP)

Cross institutional curriculum change

• 1st year immersive module  weeks 1-4, 20Cr
  – Introduction to the key principles of the discipline and contextualises the programme to the wider world
• 2 hour teaching blocks, emphasising student-led study and group work
• Inclusive assessment
• Plymouth Plus 20cr, start semester 2.
Immersive Learning (IL)

• ‘Students experience one course at a time by engaging in learning activities within extended blocks of time’ (Petrowsky, 1996)

• Benefits to:
  – Retention, academic self concept & critical thinking (Soldner et al., 2000; Richmond & Krank, 2007; Burton & Nesbit, 2008)
  – Enhanced relationships with academics, better rating of T&L
  – Better student performance (Richmond et al., 2016)
Principles of the immersive module

- Overview and introduction to the key principles of the course
- Contextualises the course to the wider world
- Emphasis on student-led study, group work
- Two hour blocks
- Inclusive assessment, no assessment by exam / emphasis on feedforward
# Pattern of teaching for Level 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>Module 5</th>
<th>Module 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Induction week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>Immersive Module 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Vacation (3 weeks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Module 2 (cont.)</td>
<td>Module 3 (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>Assessment, co-curricular, personal tutorials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>Plymouth Plus</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Vacation (3 weeks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-28</td>
<td>Module 5 (Cont.)</td>
<td>Module 6 (Cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Assessment deadlines, co-curricular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Induction to the next level, Co-curricular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aims of the evaluation

• Capture experiences and outcomes of first year students in CEP ‘early adopter’ group;
• Compare experiences of CEP ‘early adopter’ students with others;
• Examine lecturers’ experiences of adapting their teaching and adopting different pedagogies in order to align with CEP principles.
CEP Evaluation

- Multiple sources of data, multiple methods and viewpoints (Cousins, 2009; Bamber, 2013)
  - Ethnographic work (2014): 2 programmes within the ‘early adopter’ group – health / business
    - Semi-structured observations of ALL taught sessions, follow up student FG / staff interviews
  - First years, 1st impressions survey
  - Student FG / staff IV with remaining 17 programmes
  - Ethnographic work (2015): arts / science
  - Review student retention and perform data
Belonging and Social Self-efficacy

Developing peer networks

• Social mixing, assisted by teaching and learning activities (e.g. field trips, group work)

“You’re happy to sit with anybody because we all know each other and we’re all friends, and there isn’t a feeling of, you know, ‘I don’t want to sit with them.’ ... I think that has come from those exercises and the way that the module was put together.” (HSFG#1)

• Team building activities lead into group work:

“Working in groups enabled us to discuss our worries about the assessment” (BSFG)

“I most enjoyed working as part of a team. Trying to get my point across in a working environment” (BSME)
## Belonging and Social Self-efficacy

### Level of peer interaction with other students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes, about right</th>
<th>No, too little</th>
<th>No too much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early adopter (n=191)</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard model (n=478)</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expectations of the level of academic support available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Combined high</th>
<th>About right</th>
<th>Combined low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Adopter (n=188)</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Model (n=476)</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study skills & academic self efficacy

• Two approaches
  – Business: integrated holistically in the subject content / assessment activities, taught the ML
  – Health: essential study skills introduced by ‘skills tutors’ and contextualized by ‘subject specialist’

• Mixed response to both approaches, why?
Curriculum innovation through the Immersive Module?

- 20 credits of level 4 study condensed into 4 weeks, use of 2 hour sessions
- Use of problem-based or active learning

Mismatched expectations

Student expectations of teaching methods that would be used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Very accurate</th>
<th>Quite Accurate</th>
<th>Quite Inaccurate</th>
<th>Very Inaccurate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early adopter (n=188)</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard model (n=468)</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scaffolding student learning

- A timetable provided which detailed taught session as well as indication of out of class activities e.g. reading / group work/language classes, writing café, LD sessions.
- Managed student expectations
- Introduced ‘good study’ habits
- Dedicated time to group work
Students say this is what helps them learn:

- Taking notes
- Resources/handouts
- Hands-on, doing things
- Discussion
- Interesting/stimulating/enthusiastic lecturers
- When students care
- Repetition helps
- Environment has to be right
- Pictures and video clips
- Case studies, rich scenarios
- Reading / reflection at home
- Preparatory reading
- Timing of information: to fit the curriculum and learners
- Structure: students to decide on structure themselves
- Humour!
- Recorded lectures: ability to play back
- Student as teacher: peer learning
- Constructive guidance and feedback
- Breaking things up into bite-size chunks
Inclusive assessment

Both modules used the assessment to ‘scaffold’ student learning; assessments introduced early on and guided learning

- Range of assessments e.g. group work, reflective essays, participation marks, in-class tests, portfolios
- Regular opportunities for formative feedback (tutor / peers)
- Managed anxiety:
  “Working in groups enabled us to discuss our worries about the assessment”  (BSFG)
- But – need to ensure students recognise the benefits and are equipped to take advantage of these
  – Assessment literacies work
- Benefits felt in the current academic year
# Experiences of Assessment

Have you submitted any work for assessment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>91.4%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+29.6%</td>
<td>-29.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have had any work marked, was the feedback...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Mixed Feelings</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+10.1%</td>
<td>-7.0%</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflecting on the success of the Immersive Modules

Benefits to peer networking, accessibility of academics

Provided feedback on progress to date, introduced to essential study skills and HE-level study

But are their expectations realistic?

Delaying the transition?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Retention Rate</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA Early Childhood Studies</td>
<td>86.67</td>
<td>95.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc Business Management (fast track)</td>
<td>74.51</td>
<td>77.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc Business Management (3 year)</td>
<td>77.27</td>
<td>72.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Business Studies</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>87.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA International Business</td>
<td>76.92</td>
<td>90.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA International Business with French</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA International Business with Spanish</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>83.33</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc Marketing*</td>
<td>96.23</td>
<td>94.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Cruise Management</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Hospitality Management</td>
<td>77.65</td>
<td>90.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSs International Hospitality Management</td>
<td>81.82</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc Tourism and Hospitality Management</td>
<td>70.59</td>
<td>91.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Business &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>58.33</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Tourism Management</td>
<td>93.33</td>
<td>89.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc International Tourism Management</td>
<td>77.78</td>
<td>81.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Adult Nursing*</td>
<td>86.52</td>
<td>86.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Child Health Nursing*</td>
<td>92.11</td>
<td>97.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc Mental Health Nursing*</td>
<td>80.56</td>
<td>84.61</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Concluding comments

• Immersive Learning format promoted peer networking & relationships with academic staff
• Integration of study skills challenging and requires careful framing
• Need to manage / discuss student expectations of HE-level study, ways they will learn and support for their learning
• Prepare for a ‘second’ transition
Thank You
References


