



THE FLOATING CLASSROOM

Best Practices Teach
on Semester at Sea

AGENDA

07:30-07:35	All Hands On Deck
07:35-07:40	*Muster Stations*
07:40-07:45	Teaching on Semester at Sea
07:45-07:50	*Muster Stations*
07:55-08:15	Research methods and key findings
08:15- 08:20	*Muster Stations*
08:20- 08:30	Reflection and Questions



**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER
IN THE CLASSROOM?**





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**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A
FLOATING UNIVERSITY?**



SEMESTER AT SEA: MISSION & VISION



SEMESTER AT SEA®

- **Mission:** To educate students with the global understanding necessary to address the challenges of our interdependent world. With the world as our classroom, our unique shipboard program integrates multiple-country study, interdisciplinary coursework, and hands-on field experiences for meaningful engagement in the global community.
- **Vision:** To be the leader in comparative global education.



What best-practice teaching methods did Semester at Sea faculty
use between the years of 2006 and 2013?

What extent are these methods experiential, student-centered,
problem-based, creative, comparative and/or multidisciplinary?

RESEARCH QUESTION



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**WHAT IS A BEST PRACTICE? WHAT IS A
BEST PRACTICE TEACHING METHOD?**



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RESEARCHER DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Best practice - a method of instruction that is most effective in the shipboard environment, as reported by the faculty respondents

Teaching methods - the various activities and assignments used to instruct students in the given subject

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theories of Education

Constructivism –believes individuals create knowledge and meaning out of the interplay between lived experiences and thoughts

Objectivism – believes knowledge or meaning exists outside the minds of individuals

Constructivist Pedagogies

- Experiential Education
- Student-Centered Pedagogy
- Problem-Based Learning
- Creativity in Education
- Comparative Studies
- Multidisciplinary Teaching

THEMES FROM THE LITERATURE

- Students should be empowered to learn and have a role in their own assessment
- The role of the teacher is of facilitator or co-constructor of knowledge, not the owner or distributor of the knowledge
- Issues can and should be studied from more than one point of view; there is more than one “right answer”
- Active, hands-on and small-group methods, such as group discussion, problem-solving, concept checking or simulations, help increase student understanding

RESEARCH DESIGN

- Mixed methods survey questionnaire using Semester at Sea's Survey Monkey account
- Quantitative questions (ranking scales; yes/no) and qualitative questions (open-ended)
- Random sampling from archival contact information from Summer 2006- Fall 2013 faculty members

did you use the following methods in your classroom on board?

of Use

ptions	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily	
	2%	3%	12%	42%	41%	
l Discussion	0%	2%	12%	38%	48%	
up Discussion	9%	16%	38%	28%	9%	

TEACHING METHODS

Key Findings

MOST AND LEAST EFFECTIVE TEACHING METHODS

Of the teaching methods that you used frequently or daily in your classes, which did you feel were most effective and why?

- ❖ Mixed methods (39%)
- ❖ Constructivist (36%)
- ❖ Objectivist (15%)

Of the teaching methods that you used frequently or daily in your classes, which did you feel were least effective and why?*

- ❖ Lecture (25%)
- ❖ Discussion (19%)
- ❖ Other (6%)
- ❖ Not Applicable to Me (24%)
- ❖ Problem with Students (13%)
- ❖ Problem with Logistics (8%)

*This was clearly a problematic question!

y Findings

Did you assign the following out-of-class work on board?

of Use

itions	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily	
	3%	10%	36%	29%	23%	
	15%	4%	11%	27%	44%	
ource	5%	16%	29%	29%	20%	
	22%	11%	27%	33%	7%	

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Key Findings

HOW OFTEN DID YOU ASSIGN THE FOLLOWING OUT-OF-CLASS WORK ON BOARD?

- 44% assigned textbook reading daily
- 36% assigned homework occasionally
- 33% assigned journaling frequently
- 29% assigned primary source reading occasionally/frequently

How often do you assess student learning in your class? How often did you use this assessment method?

Frequency of Use

Options	Never	Once	Two times	Three times	Four or more times
	6%	21%	27%	18%	29%
	9%	19%	47%	21%	4%
	48%	7%	10%	8%	26%
Oral Presentations	35%	37%	10%	5%	13%
Written Presentations	43%	38%	8%	6%	6%

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Key Findings

HOW DID YOU ASSESS STUDENT LEARNING IN YOUR CLASS? HOW OFTEN DID YOU USE THIS ASSESSMENT METHOD?

- 47% had 2 exams
- 37% assigned individual presentations once
- 29% assigned papers 4 or more times and 27% twice
- 48% never used quizzes, 43% never used group presentations

WHAT WERE THE BEST PRACTICES USED ON SEMESTER AT SEA?



BEST PRACTICE: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

BEST PRACTICE: EXPERIENTIAL METHODS

BEST PRACTICE: ADAPTIVE TEACHING