THE FLOATING CLASSROOM

Best Practices Teaching 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?
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A FLOATING UNIVERSITY?
SEMESTER AT SEA: MISSION & VISION

➢ 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?
WHAT IS A BEST PRACTICE? WHAT IS A BEST PRACTICE TEACHING METHOD?
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Methods</th>
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<tr>
<td>Did you use the following methods in your classroom on board?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Method</th>
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<th>Rarely</th>
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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!
**did you assign the following out-of-class work on board?**

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

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<th>Options</th>
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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